

# **Learning Organization, Community Participation and School Effectiveness at the Primary Stage**

Studies discussed at the  
1998 International Seminar  
on  
Learning Organization,  
Community Participation and  
School Effectiveness  
at the Primary Stage



**राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्**  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND  
SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS  
AT THE PRIMARY STAGE**



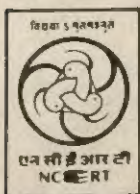
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# LEARNING ORGANIZATION, COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AT THE PRIMARY STAGE

*Studies discussed at the 1998 International Seminar  
on Learning Organization, Community Participation and  
School Effectiveness at the Primary Stage, held at New Delhi, India  
during 15—17 July 1998*



राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्  
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## Foreword

INDIA has gone a long way towards providing a primary school for most habitations. But the fact remains that a majority of the primary schools in our country are at best two-teacher schools with the problem of overcrowded classrooms. The teachers in such institutions invariably require newer strategies for organizing learning of pupils in multigrade situations. The teacher needs to be empowered to explore these strategies through recurrent training. Towards understanding the strategies, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) organized the fourth International Seminar on Learning Organization, Community Participation and School Effectiveness at the primary stage in July 1998. The main objective of the seminar was to learn of solutions from the researches for making primary education effective in the context in which schools function in India.

This volume makes an attempt to provide a brief sketch of the research studies presented during the seminar.

Contributions to this seminar were made by Indian and foreign researchers and promising papers were presented during the technical sessions. Findings and implications of the studies presented during the seminar hold promise for those who wish to seek directions for the future.

I wish to express my deep appreciation for the support provided by the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) Bureau of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) towards the organization of the seminar and for its smooth conduct. The generous support extended by the international funding agencies, namely, the European Commission, the UNICEF, and the DFID for sponsoring the participation of foreign scholars for this seminar is gratefully acknowledged.

Professor Ved Prakash and his team of dedicated colleagues, Dr S.K.S. Gautam, Dr I.K. Bansal and Smt. M. Bhalla processed the studies and brought them out in their present form. Their untiring efforts to disseminate research findings to fellow researchers in general and field practitioners in particular through this publication, are indeed commendable.

It is hoped that the present publication will benefit researchers and practitioners alike.

A.K. SHARMA  
*Director*

National Council of Educational  
Research and Training

New Delhi  
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## ***Introduction***

THE NCERT has been organizing International Seminars since 1995 on issues relating to school effectiveness. The first International Seminar was organized by the NCERT in July 1995. The theme of this seminar was Learning Achievement and School Effectiveness at Primary Stage. This was followed by the second International Seminar on Classroom Processes and School Effectiveness at Primary Stage held from 24 to 26 July 1996. The third International Seminar was held in the same series on Teacher Empowerment and School Effectiveness from 23 to 25 July 1997 at New Delhi. The aim of all these seminars was to share research and studies conducted at the Primary School Stage under different socio-cultural contexts in India and abroad in order to understand the functioning of variables related to learning achievement, classroom processes, teacher empowerment and their contribution to school effectiveness. All these seminars drew an overwhelming response from the community of the in-country and international researchers.

The NCERT announced the organization of the fourth International Seminar on Learning Organization and Community Participation for School Effectiveness at the Primary Stage in December 1997. The announcement received overwhelming response both from India and abroad. In all, there were 253 contributions.

The fourth International Seminar was held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi from 15 to 17 July 1998 under the aegis of the District Primary Education Programme. This seminar focussed on the sub-theme, namely, organization of learning in multigrade/multilevel/multicultural classroom situations, management of learning in large-sized classes, organization of learning for children with special needs, school climate and interpersonal relations, school planning and management, alternative approaches to curriculum, community and school management, community and resource mobilization, Panchayati Raj institutions and primary education, parent-teacher relationship and case studies.

As per the past practice, four Regional Seminars preceded the conduct of the International Seminar. The Regional Seminars were organized at the Regional Institutes of Education at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneshwar and Mysore during April-May 1997 for the purpose of identifying promising papers for the main event.

The first stage screening of papers was done at the level of the NCERT by a committee of experts. In all 70 abstracts were shortlisted. Of them eight were from foreign contributors and the rest were from professionals from within the country. The committee shortlisted 62 papers for regional presentations; of them, 11 were presented at RIE, Ajmer, 13 at Bhopal, 12 at Bhubaneswar and 13 at Mysore.

The authors of the research papers were invited to make their presentations in the regional seminars wherein these papers were rated by the members of the Jury against a six - point criteria using a five - point scale. The jury comprised senior members of the faculty drawn from the university system as well as from the NCERT. The top 23 papers for the main presentation and three for poster session presentation were identified on the basis of pooled summated ratings for final selection at the national level.

The same criteria of selection was applied to the papers received from international scholars. Of the 17 papers received from abroad, finally eight papers were selected for presentation in this seminar. However, one of the participants opted out because of his prior commitments.

The overseas participants who attended this seminar hailed from Denmark, Ireland, Le: otho, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Although 23 main presentations and three poster session presentations were scheduled for the seminar, ultimately 28 main presentations and three poster session presentations were made in the seminar.

Active participation in the deliberations of the seminar by representatives of the European Commission (EC), the World Bank (WB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) Bureau of the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, senior faculty members of the NCERT, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Departments of Education of some Indian Unviersities was very encouraging. Besides the inaugural session, eight technical sessions, and the valedictory session, there were two panel discussions on the themes 'Learning Organization' and 'Community Participation'.

The proceedings in this report give a brief account of session-wise presentations and discussions. For further details the reader may contact the author(s) of the studies.



## ***Inaugural Session***

PROF. A.K. SHARMA, while extending his welcome to the distinguished delegates from India and abroad, apprised them of the extraordinary situation that had taken place which necessitated the presence of Dr Murli Manohar Joshi, Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development in the Parliament. Due to unavoidable circumstances the Hon'ble Minister could not inaugurate the session. However, the Director, NCERT was advised by him to read his address.

In the text of his inaugural address, Dr Joshi lamented that even after fifty years of Independence the legacy of the West could not be shaken off, for we still followed the age old pattern of education which precluded the participation of the community in the education of its own wards. The Hon'ble Minister stressed the significance of contextuality for imparting education at the primary stage and said that the DPEP was a move in the right direction wherein the district was considered as a unit for planning and management.

Prof. A.K. Sharma expressed his appreciation for the gradually upward trend in the quality of researches in primary education. He looked forward to the participation of the scholars and sharing of experiences that would be mutually beneficial to India and other developing countries. He also conveyed his pleasure over the increasing demand from Universities for funding of researches in primary education. He expressed his admiration for the important role played by the non-governmental organizations in understanding primary education.

Prof. A.N. Maheshwari, Joint Director, NCERT proposed a formal vote of thanks to the Hon'ble Minister for sharing his inaugural remarks through the text of his inaugural address. He also thanked Shri P.R. Dasgupta, Secretary, Education and Shri R.S. Pandey, Joint Secretary, DPEP for being a constant source of strength for the organization of the seminar. He conveyed his thanks to all the international agencies for making possible the participation of foreign researchers. Finally he thanked all the participants for evincing such great interest in the issues pertaining to primary education.

Technical Session I was advanced by an hour as the events of the inaugural session were shortened by the unexpected change in the visit of the Hon'ble Minister.

### *Technical Session I*

## **Learning Organization and Cognitive Growth**

TECHNICAL SESSION I was held from 10.45 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. on 15 July 1998.

The session was chaired by Mr Edward H. Heneveld. In addition to the lead presentation on the theme 'Learning Organization and Cognitive Growth' by Mr John Shotton, the following papers were presented.

- Teaching and learning in Indian primary schools using local experiences.
- Conceptual strategies employed by the perceptually decentering and non-decentering village school children.
- The influence of culture on cognitive thinking—a study on the socially disadvantaged girls of Mysore.
- Strategies to reorder and restructure the curriculum at the primary stage.

Based on his field based experiences, the lead presenter highlighted the main features of learning organization at the primary level in India, basically in terms of.

- Physical facilities existing in primary schools.
- Learning environment (classroom interaction).
- Cognitive growth of Indian children.
- Community participation in school education.

He apprised the delegates of some of the positive movements taking place in learning organizations in India. He further added that the community, particularly women, had started taking interest in the education of their children. He appreciated the efforts of DPEP for bringing about changes in primary education in India, especially in the designing of curriculum/learner friendly textbooks, improving enrolment and drastically reducing drop-out rates amongst disadvantaged groups. He also appreciated the work done by some

non-Government organizations like Lok Jumbish, Shiksha Karmi etc. in primary education in India.

After reviewing the four papers to be presented in the session, he arrived at the main focus of the papers, i.e.

- Use of local experience as a means of contextualization of teaching-learning.
- Exploring conceptual strategies employed by the village school children; possibility of bringing cultural inputs into the school curriculum
- Structuring curriculum on the basis of cognitive development of pupils.

Concluding his presentation he raised two important issues related to the theme of the session:

- (i) How far should the process of pedagogical renewal in Indian primary education be centered around cognitive development of children?
- (ii) In the search for equity in educational provision and achievement, how far did Indian primary education require models of learning organization that considered the importance of individual cultural experiences?

### **Teaching and Learning in Indian Primary Schools Using Local Experiences**

JOHN SHOTTON

The study aimed at (i) gathering information about schools which had used local experience as a means of contextualizing teaching and learning and comparing such schools with others lacking this approach; (ii) evaluating the impact of this practice on school attendance, school performance, development of school community links and on teacher pupils and parental attitudes.

Eight case studies were carried out. These were located in two primary schools in each of the four States, i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and West Bengal. In each State one case study school was recognized as a progressive school (where teachers had received training under DPEP) and the other school was an ordinary school. The data was collected from the schools through documents, classroom observation, semi-structured interviews and three participatory activities namely, order ranking, matrix ranking and mapping. The data was analyzed qualitatively.



The study revealed that (i) the most common approach used in Indian primary school was still talk and chalk. However the teachers who received training under DPEP had made a beginning to contextualize their teaching and learning. (ii) Teachers hardly contextualized their teaching-learning due to lack of flexibility, resources, time constraints, overcrowded classes and poor teacher training. (iii) The performance of children in progressive schools was found to be better as compared to the performance of children in non-progressive schools.

The study suggested that (i) cooperation between the head teacher, teachers, students and community members was vital in contextualizing teaching and learning; (ii) teacher training and support was a critical factor to contextualize teaching-learning.

### **Conceptual Strategies Employed by the Perceptually Decentering and Non-decentering Village School Children**

A.C.PACHAURY

The study explored conceptual strategies employed by the perceptually decentering and non-decentering village school children by 'Semi Clinical Method'. The sample was drawn from five lab area village schools of a district in Madhya Pradesh. Seventy-nine randomly selected school children from Classes III, IV and V formed the sample.

The perceptual decentering tasks and conceptual strategies tasks were administered on sampled children. Elkind's tasks were used as a criterion measure to bifurcate the children into perceptually decentering and non-decentering categories. The Omega statistic ( $w$ ) was used to determine the significant differences between percentages. Major findings of the study were as follows.

1. A delay of three to five years existed in the perceptually decentering ability of sample village school children. However, a clear progression across the grades on this ability was observed.
2. There did not exist any significant difference between the percentage of perceptually decentering boys/boys, girls/girls, boys/girls and grade pairs across the standards and grade pairs between the perceptually decentering and non-decentering children.

The study supported the view that the sampled village schools

were unable to develop future perceptual decentering behaviour in their students. The classroom instruction of these village schools did very little for the promotion of conceptual thinking of their students. Rather whatever levels of strategies had been employed by these children were their own spontaneous creation in response to task exposure.

The study suggests two "deficit specific" classroom interventions for improving the perceptual skills and conceptual thinking of sampled disadvantaged students, i.e., exposing students to Frostig's type of activities and giving orientation to the teacher for exploring the learning environment for promoting conceptual learning.

### **The Influence of Culture on Cognitive Thinking : A Study of Socially Disadvantaged Girls of Mysore**

T. PADMINI

The study was conducted to explore whether a cultural factor like *rangoli* drawing (predominantly a perceptual ability) influences cognitive thinking among socially disadvantaged girls. The study was conducted on 280 girls from 12 government primary schools in and around Mysore city catering to low socio-economic status groups in the age group of 8-11 years. The tools included *rangoli* patterns and two non verbal culture fair tests, i.e. (i) Raven's CPM, and (ii) Pathak's Draw - a - Man Test to measure intelligence.

*Rangoli* patterns were assessed qualitatively. Percentile ranking was computed for each subject.  $r^{(bis)}$  was computed to find out the extent of relationship between *rangoli* drawing skills and the CPM scores.  $\chi^2$  and contingency coefficient 'c' was also computed to see the relationship between two intelligence tests and *rangoli* drawing skills.

The study showed a positively significant relationship between *rangoli* drawing skills and performance on CPM at 0.01 level and between *rangoli* drawing skills and Draw - a - Man Test at 0.05 level. The study inferred that the *rangoli* drawing skills as a cultural factor present in the socially disadvantaged girls influenced, to a considerable extent, the cognitive thinking in general and perceptual abilities in particular.

The study suggested that the influence of culture should be examined while framing curriculum and curriculum transaction especially for first generation learners belonging to disadvantaged groups. The essential components of *rangoli* drawings which could be used in the school curriculum were also spelt out in detail.

## **Strategies to Reorder and Restructure the Curriculum at the Primary Stage**

MADHURI MAHAPATRA

The study was conducted to ascertain whether the subject matter related to physics in Class V is ordered and appropriately matched to the learners' stages of development or not in the Piagetian framework. One hundred and ten pupils of Class V of D.M.School and Kendriya Vidyalaya I located at Bhubaneswar were chosen for determining the cognitive development level. Interview was conducted on 40 students and 20 teachers randomly selected from five schools in Bhubaneswar. The physics chapters of Class V textbook published by NCERT, 1997, were chosen to ascertain the cognitive demand/Piagetian stages of the physics concepts.

The Science Reasoning Task-IV, developed by CSMS group of Chelsea College, London, was used as a tool to ascertain the cognitive development level of pupils. Curriculum Analysis Taxonomics (CAT) had been used to ascertain the cognitive demand of the activities.

The answer scripts of Task-IV were analyzed using the assessment rules. The cognitive demand of the activities and cognitive level of the pupils were used for match/mismatch. Interviews were also conducted with teachers and pupils to know the difficult concepts.

The main findings of the study indicated that the chapter 'Shadows and Eclipses' was the most appropriately ordered chapter. The chapter 'Force, Work and Energy' and 'Simple Machine' appeared to be difficult and needed reorganization. The study inferred that concepts and topics included in a textbook for a specific class should match the cognitive level of pupils at that particular stage.

### **Observations on Presentations of Technical Session I**

- Factors inhibiting contextualization of teaching-learning in Indian primary schools needed to be studied at the grass roots.
- Certain issues had to be discussed for contextualizing teaching-learning, e.g. teacher-pupil ratio, catchment area and content to be contextualized.
- Curriculum should match the child's cognitive development and capacities
- What should be the criteria for selecting topics/concepts in a textbook needed to be looked into



— Field-testing of textbooks prior to their use should be done.

While summarizing the session, the Chairperson emphasized that all children who came to school were different, therefore, the strategies needed to deal with them had to be different. Contextualization was very important for improving quality of teaching-learning and for bringing more children into school. He concluded that the teacher and the curriculum were the most important factors for contextualizing teaching-learning.

## *Technical Session II*

# **Learning Organization in Multigrade/Multilevel Situations/ Special Education**

TECHNICAL SESSION II was held from 2.30 to 4.15 p.m. on 15 July 1998, with Prof. A.N. Maheshwari, Joint Director, NCERT, in the chair. In addition to the lead presentation by Shri Rohit Dhankar of Jaipur on 'Multigrade/Multilevel Learning — Contexts for Normal Children', the following papers were presented in the session.

- Inclusive Education—A Path for DPEP
- Multigrade Teaching in Small Schools
- Management and Organization of Learning in Multilevel/  
Multigrade Situations for School Effectiveness

In his lead presentation on Multigrade/Multilevel Learning Contexts for Normal Children Shri Rohit Dhankar pointed out conceptual differences between multigrade and multilevel teaching-learning situations. He was of the firm opinion that multigrade and multilevel are two different teaching-learning situations. In his lucid presentation, the speaker talked about these differences.

A monograde learning situation was characterized by certain organization of knowledge that the child needed to learn on yearly/half-yearly basis. The acquisition of this knowledge was tested periodically, half-yearly or annually.

The evaluation did not emphasize on how much the child had learnt but on whether the child had learnt what the teacher wanted him to learn. This made the teaching-learning process more teacher and textbook centered. It did not take care of individual differences among the students. This monograde model had been in use and had perpetuated for two reasons. First, it was highly amenable to standardization, second, it was management-friendly. Thus, by design, monograde teaching induced conformity in the child and his/her independence and autonomy was neglected.

The presenter was of the view that multigrade teaching-learning model embraced all the characteristics of the monograde model.

The only difference between monograde and multigrade models was that the latter was characterized by the teaching of two or more grades by one teacher at a time.

In contrast to the multigrade model, the multilevel model emphasized acquisition of particular skills/abilities/or competencies. Once a child had acquired a particular skill, he/she could go in for acquiring higher-order skills. This pattern of education was in vogue in ancient times and was still being followed in the *Pathshala* system of education. The advantage of multilevel system was that it was child-friendly and provided opportunities to children to learn with understanding. This system also placed emphasis on preparing children for the needed skill. The limitation of this system was, however, that teachers and students both felt relaxed because of the freedom provided by the system.

### **Inclusive Education : A Path for the DPEP**

PETER GAM

The presentation analyzed a number of pilot projects being carried out in Denmark and the United Kingdom with a view to analyzing the effectiveness of various strategies needed for integration of children with special needs.

Presenting the historical background of education of children with special educational needs, the presenter highlighted the limitations of the comprehensive school system being followed in Denmark in the 1940s and the 1950s. In recent years, he said, the teaching of handicapped children was based on the principles of proximity, minimum interference, efficiency, and the idea of integration/inclusion. These new ideas were breaking new ground in Denmark and were based on the principles of organization, normalization and decentralization.

With a view to revising curriculum for children with special educational needs, a five year project was launched in 1988/89 in which all students followed the same schedule, were in the same classroom, and were taught by the same teacher.

The findings of this project indicated that only in a group in which the student with disability was able to establish mutual educational relations, was getting linguistic stimulation and had opportunities for communication and help with his individual development, was able to feel well, secure and accepted, and felt that he belonged to the group.

The presentation highlighted that since the process of integration took place at various levels, any integration programme ought to



take care of these levels. These were individual interaction, institution, society, teaching and teacher-training, and the local community levels. Also, the local community and district administration should be taken into confidence in such types of programmes.

### **Multigrade Teaching in Small Schools**

N.S.BHARADWAJ, ARUNA BODA

The study was designed to field test some innovative ideas of academic use of class monitors, formation of management committees, development of learning corners, group teaching and use of 'My Diary' in solving the problems of multigrade teaching in Indian classrooms.

The study was conducted in 20 rural primary schools (10 experimental schools and 10 control schools) of Dhar District in Madhya Pradesh. The students studying in Grades IV and V participated in the study. The following materials were developed for use in this study.

- (i) Records to be maintained by the learners ('My Own Diary' and 'My Own Attendance Card')
- (ii) Records to be maintained by the teachers (use of class monitor, students' performance record, record of competence-based evaluation), and
- (iii) Other materials (competency-based questionnaire, monitoring and weekly teaching plan, learning corners, learning kits).

Results indicated that learning attainments of students improved by 37 to 38 per cent. The use of 'My Diary' encouraged free expression in children. The maintenance of self attendance saved 10 to 15 minutes per day of every teacher and increased average attendance of the students. The use of class monitor system had reduced the burden of the teacher and also helped in developing leadership quality among students. The learning corner provided an opportunity to students to learn through inductive reasoning and also removed the practice of rote learning among students.

The implications of the study were as follows.

1. A short training-cum-orientation programme for teachers, related to their motivation, should be organized at least once a year.

2. The results of the study should be incorporated in the regular teachers' training programmes.
3. The school buildings needed to be designed keeping the multigrade context in view. A place might have to be created where the teacher could sit and control all the classes.

### **Management and Organization of Learning in Multilevel/Multigrade Situations for School Effectiveness**

KUSUM N. KAMAT

The study examined the effectiveness of a programme to improve the achievement of pupils. The programme was based on the notion that students' achievement depended upon their pre-school experiences, readiness to learn, the home environment, learner's interest and ability to learn, and teacher's skill to plan, organize and manage the learning of students.

The pilot study included 1800 students of Grades I to IV studying in two municipal schools of Maharashtra. In the main study 6700 students studying in 18 municipal schools of Maharashtra participated. The students were divided into homogenous achievement groups within the class for teaching of language and arithmetic. Competency-based graded achievement test was developed. Various techniques of teaching such as dramatization, role play, games, projects, discussions, demonstrations, story telling, etc. were tried out for teaching children in large, small, peer-pair groups, and individualization.

The findings revealed that, depending upon the content of teaching the same techniques could be used for teaching different competencies or different techniques were required for the same competency. Formation of small groups facilitated learning. However, the formation and effectiveness of the groups depend upon the teacher's ability to diagnose individual performance. Open space in the middle of the class, display of students' work, and easy access to learning materials were observed to be conducive to children's learning. Time scheduling of different activities demanded flexibility. Weekly and monthly meetings with parents improved children's attendance in the school. Also, the school atmosphere had a positive impact on attendance.

The implications of the study were as follows.

1. For effective learning in large-sized classes, small-group

teaching techniques might be used.

2. For multilevel class, instructions might be organized in groups formed on the basis of level of achievement of earlier sequential competency.
3. Remedial measures might be taken to fill the gap.
4. In planning the instructions, priority should be given to learning of language of that unit.
5. Competencies of different subjects might be integrated.
6. Techniques of teaching in multilevel large-sized classes might be tried in multigrade teaching
7. Intensive training might be imparted to teachers to use programmed instructions approach in day-to-day teaching.

### **Observations on Presentations of Technical Session II**

- It was observed that the notion of ungraded school system, which was developed and tested by NCERT some years ago, was similar to the multilevel type of schooling system.
- It was apprehended that a system of education developed elsewhere, such as in the study conducted in Denmark, which was characterized by three teachers for a class of 20 students, might not be applicable in the Indian context where one teacher usually teaches more than one grade at a time.
- It was felt that integration of severely handicapped children in the general school system might not be an appropriate step.

The session closed with a vote of thanks by the Chair to the paper presenters and participants.



### *Technical Session III*

## **Alternative Approach to Curriculum**

TECHNICAL SESSION III was held from 4.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. on 15 July 1998 with Professor Bert Creemers in the Chair. In addition to the lead presentation by Tom Welsh on Information base and self-sufficiency, the following papers were presented in the session.

- Back to Basics : research based lessons for effective school learning in India
- Functioning of alternative schools in DPEP Districts of Madhya Pradesh
- Capturing the process of indigenous rural skills and revamping the pedagogy at the primary level.
- Achievement in science and mathematics as a function and learning organization of competencies in mathematics at the primary stage.

Deviating from the theme of alternative approaches to curriculum the lead presenter, Tom Welsh, highlighted the need to make relevant and reliable information available at the school level in order to make schools self-sufficient. It was stressed that not having the right information was also a kind of poverty. The presentation touched on the issue of contextuality in problems faced and their solutions across the globe. The operational indicators of success in a rural school were the existence of a community committee, low cost locally prepared teaching-learning materials, contextualizing the curriculum, etc.

### **Back to Basics : Research-Based Lessons for Effective School Learning in India**

ANDREW BURKE

The major objective of the paper was to learn of solutions from researchers for making education effective in the context in which

schools function in India with a special emphasis on 'new pedagogy'. The paper had drawn on relevant research done in India and abroad, especially in Lesotho in the area of teacher education and also the first hand experience of the researcher in India under the District Primary Education Programme. The strength of the paper lay in the kind of socio-historical analysis done on the relevance of new pedagogy in the Indian context.

Classroom teaching in developing countries including India was characterized by pupil instruction being over-authoritarian, teacher centered, mechanical and unduly repetitive. Teacher education programme lacked in teaching methodologies related to multigrade teaching, special education, etc. The teaching techniques did not approximate to children's learning styles. However, the approach adopted under DPEP was found to be quite progressive and liberal. There were conscious efforts to build up a child centered pedagogy. But, at the same time, the researcher also expressed apprehensions regarding uncritical and unquestioning acceptance of the new pedagogy in DPEP states and lack of knowledge of the problems associated with new pedagogy in USA and England.

Keeping in view the misinterpretation and misapplication of new pedagogy and also a piecemeal and uneven development of some aspects of the new approach in DPEP States, it was concluded that pedagogical capacity building would become an indispensable component of effective educational reform. In other words what was urgently needed among DPEP teachers was a better understanding and more balanced approach to pedagogy, avoidance of the now outdated polarity between traditional/progressive, formal/informational approach. It was also contended that the alternative approach could take into consideration the socio-cultural and political factors of the country. An analysis of the case studies also indicated that the benefits of the well planned formal teaching could be reconsidered in the context of current class size in India.

The major implications of the paper were as follows.

1. Unless the teachers obtained an opportunity to hear and discuss the arguments for and against any particular approach to pedagogy, developed a basic understanding of it and adapted a version of it that would be appropriate to their context and compatible with their culture, the new pedagogy might generate a reaction against itself sooner or later.
2. If the education history of any particular pedagogical movement was not known, its mistakes were likely to be

repeated. The warnings emanating from those countries as to the shortcomings of the new pedagogy, its limited applicability in large class situations, the history of its misinterpretation and misapplications could be sufficiently considered while designing a child centered pedagogy in the Indian context.

3. The formal instructions in large class situations in India would not always be incompatible with innovative and interactive teaching.

### **Functioning of Alternative Schools (AC) in DPEP Districts of Madhya Pradesh**

REETA SHARMA, V. P. GUPTA, V. P. SINGH

The study was carried out with the aim of finding out the (i) strengths and weaknesses of AS, and (ii) to assess the enrolment and drop-out status of children in AS. Data was collected from 37 randomly selected AS from 12 blocks of six districts of Madhya Pradesh, namely Betul, Dhar, Raisen, Rajgarh, Rewa and Sehore. Observation and interview schedules were used to collect data. Distribution of responses was calculated regarding the various aspects of the study, which helped to build up the profile of AS with regard to its functioning.

The findings revealed the significant contributing factors of effective supervision, monitoring and evaluation. These were — distance of AS from headquarters, venue, suitable timings, number of hours and availability of teaching-learning materials. Satisfactory general performance of 37 AS in the six districts of Madhya Pradesh in terms of enrolment and retention was also shown.

### **Capturing the Process of Indigenous Rural Skills for Revamping the Pedagogy at the Primary Level**

BAIJAYANTI MALA SATAPATHY

The main objective of the study were (i) mapping out and understanding the indigenous skill acquisition process, and (ii) trying out this method for teaching various subjects in the primary classes.

This was an innovative project. However the project lacked in the vigour of methodology. The sample of the study comprised men and women engaged in bamboo, clay, straw, applique and *alpana* work and 50 Class IV students of George Primary School, Dhenkanal



Municipality. Two types of tools used for the study were (a) interview schedule, and (b) experimentation through classroom intervention.

The study revealed that the children learnt very complex skills like intricate bamboo work, applique and *alpana* work, etc. with very little effort from the community. They enjoyed the process of learning because they had the opportunity to observe the process in a less rule governed and less authoritarian environment. The children had the opportunity to observe every step, touched the product and at times, fiddled around with the material, made attempts to prepare some parts of it as well. Since the materials used were generally taken from the local environment, the children had the advantage of having prior knowledge about the relationship and the use of various materials. Many a time the children provided support to the elders and therefore learnt by doing. Their mistakes were corrected in a non-offensive manner on the spot itself. Besides, children received rewards for doing better work. At the end it was observed that the children mastered these complex skills almost effortlessly.

This method of teaching was tried out in the classroom for *Thunga* making with the help of a *Thunga* maker from the community. Similar results were obtained. The children experienced more joy and also mastered the skill.

Implications were drawn for designing an alternative approach to curriculum and transactional practices specifically for the children living in rural India. Some major implications of this study are as follows.

1. Certain life skills which carried relevance for the community as well as the children could form part of the curriculum.
2. The natural skill acquisition process could inform the teaching-learning processes and thereafter the curriculum of teacher education.
3. Direct experience could be provided in the classroom by involving the skilled men from the community in the classroom processes. This could have the indirect impact of drawing the community closer to the school.

## **Achievement in Science and Mathematics as a Function of Learning Organization of Competencies in Mathematics at the Primary Stage**

**K.K.VASISHTHA, KRISHNA KUMAR MADAN**

The study aimed at identifying the hard-spots of learning in mathematics at the primary stage and examined the impact of their mastery/non-mastery on the achievement of students in mathematics and science through Normative Testing Survey method using the cross-sectional approach. The sample comprised 200 students of Classes VIII and X studying in NCT, Delhi, and their 40 mathematics teachers. Data was collected using (i) Teacher's perception scale, and (ii) criterion referenced competency based mathematical ability test. Point-Biserial coefficient of correlation helped in establishing the relationship between mastery/non-mastery on MLL and corresponding achievement in mathematics and science.

### **Observations on Presentation of Technical Session III**

An in-depth discussion was conducted on the problems associated with the 'new pedagogy' in Western countries like the USA, England and Wales and the nature and the shape of the reaction against these movements. The suggestion by Mr Andrew Burke for redefining the role of DIET was further elaborated accommodating the specific needs of this country. On Ms Reeta Sharma's paper it was observed that proposing less distance of AS from HQ defeated the purpose of establishing AS since the main concern for an AS is to provide access.

With regard to the paper presented by Dr B. Satapathy, suggestions were made to document the complexities of indigenous skill acquisition processes and draw on implication for teaching-learning processes for other subject areas also. Questions were raised on K.K.Vasishtha's paper whether criterion-referenced tests and the criterions used in assessing the MLL competencies could be used interchangeably.

### *Technical Session IV*

## **Activity Based Classroom Transaction**

THE SESSION was chaired by Professor Peter Gam and the lead presentation was made by Professor Venita Kaul, Head, Department of Pre-School and Elementary Education. The following papers were presented.

- The School Mathematics Project: Towards Freedom from Fear
- Learning Subject Specific Concepts through Creative Activities
- Effect of Puzzle Programme in the Development of Cognitive and Creative Abilities among Pre-School Children
- Activity Based Classroom Transaction: A Case Study

Cautioning against oversimplification of the child - centred approach and the dangers of being caught in 'isms' some of the major concerns of curriculum transaction were discussed by the lead presenter Venita Kaul. Focussing on the reference point for assessing effectiveness of a method the need to focus on social and affective aspects besides cognitive needed to be stressed on. Other related aspects which needed to be looked into were aim of transaction, objectives of learning in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities.

Examining the classroom practices vis-a-vis the various theoretical frameworks, salient features of each were delineated. Behaviouristic approach used a didactic approach to teaching-learning, addressed the whole class and emphasized on practice, rote memorization and drill. In contrast, the constructivistic approach was participatory in nature and made provisions for accommodating and assimilating the experiences of the child in learning. Role of the teacher, therefore, was largely centred around classroom organization. Social constructivistic approach emphasized that the teacher's role was that of an active participant in the child's learning. Also, it provided opportunities to the learners to construct knowledge for themselves.



The various approaches viewed the teacher's role differently. According to the behaviourists, decisions regarding what to teach and how to teach lay with the teacher; constructivists emphasized that learning should be in accordance with the child's capacities and activities and, therefore, was participatory. Negotiations between teachers and children was the focus of social constructivists which resulted in vibrant interactions.

The elements of an activity - based teaching were defined as (i) relating teaching to previous learning knowledge, (ii) participation leading to active learning, (iii) democratic class climate, and (iv) providing opportunity for discussion, negotiation with peers and teachers.

#### **Observations on Presentations of Technical Session IV**

The presentations raised certain issues related to activity - based classroom transaction, like

- Sufficiency of one single approach towards fitness for purpose.
- How much component of instruction was to be included in learning.
- Dilemmas of less competent teacher and teacher centered approach to more teacher competency and child centredness.
- Adoption of MLL vs. open - ended constructivistic approach.

### **The School Mathematics Project: Towards Freedom From Fear**

V.S. VARMA

The study aimed at reducing fear of mathematics through an intensive classroom based project called the School Mathematics Project. The main objectives of the study/project were

- To understand the specific causes of fear of mathematics in children, and
- To move towards a curriculum that removes these causes and improves learning of mathematics.

The school mathematics project comprised school and university teachers and persons engaged in actually teaching mathematics. Informal meetings of the group were held to identify and examine different issues. These meetings led to the organization of a national seminar on Primary School Mathematics—the Basis for Curricular



— Choices, that helped in sharing the learning experiences of all those who were currently engaged in developing new approaches for mathematics teaching. Following this, contact was established with a number of schools in Delhi and a second seminar and series of material development workshops were held. Simultaneously, surveys of teachers' attitudes and children's achievement were carried out and a new curriculum was crafted out based on all these interactions.

The major outcome of the study was in the form of a set of perceptions about the teachers, children and mathematics called the SMP Approach. The approach stated

- Each child was equipped with certain awareness of numbers and operations and moved at a pace picking up new concepts and skills while exhibiting individual differences.
- Learning was better if they were actively engaged in what they were doing.
- Since learning was a slow process involving many loops and feedback, use of emerging concepts in diverse situations of learning, having meaningful context for mathematics was advantageous for children.
- Mathematics not only encompassed numbers and algorithms but also shapes, space, patterns, structures, data handling and measurement.
- Mathematics could be a source of joy only if the teacher could communicate this to the children.
- Finally, the curriculum should be revised in the light of all these perceptions and the teacher, who had to transact this curriculum should be convinced of the need for change and provide all the possible support.

The findings of the study implied that the progression should be from concrete to the oral contextual mode and to the symbolic and abstract. Work related to shapes and patterns along with numerical work, puzzles and riddles, collection and recording of data, discussion of errors and alternative strategies in problem solving, estimation and developing a feeling for the magnitude of the correct answer might all form a part of the mathematics curriculum. The curriculum itself should be developed in conjunction with practising school teachers with constant feedback from the classroom.

## **Learning Subject-specific Concepts through Creative Activities**

J.S. PADHI

The research aimed at studying learning of subject-specific concepts through creative activities aiming to ensure joyful learning experiences in rural, multigrade, multilevel settings and in large sized classrooms.

The major objectives of the study were

- To organize learning concepts of different subjects in blended form for creative activities.
- To develop divergent productive thinking and help learners to attain subject related concepts through these activities.
- To train the learners for carrying out independent thinking activities.

Sixty learners of Class II of D.M. School, Bhubaneshwar, Orissa were selected as the sample of the study. Five blended concepts of different subject areas were identified and related creative activities were prepared. The activities were then initiated in the classrooms in two situations under the supervision of the teacher and to be carried out independently by students. The sequence, for example—Teacher Supervised Activity - Teacher Unsupervised Activity— was followed. The learners were evaluated for the concepts attained with the fluency score of the items.

The major outcomes of the study were: divergent abilities of the learners increased gradually from activity 1 to 5 in both the teacher supervised and unsupervised sessions. The learners were found to be self-motivated during the non-supervised period. The students, however, performed better under teacher supervision.

The major implications of the study for school effectiveness were: the school curriculum reorganized in terms of creative activities increased the resourcefulness of the teacher and helped in obtaining flexible, divergent, productive and uncommon responses from the students increasing their self confidence, motivation and independent thinking that continued even after school hours. Learning environment became game-like, enjoyable, self-paced and learner centered. This intervention strategy was appropriate for large sized, multigrade situations as teachers who were hard pressed for time could organize more unsupervised activities.

The discussions after the paper presentations centered around harnessing of activity based approach to learning outcomes and the



existing curriculum. This was important in the light of the danger evolving from parallel approaches. The activities, it was felt, had to be interwoven in the present day syllabus and not remain a mere culmination of assorted activities. It was also felt that the conceptualization of activity based approach had to be understood better to produce meaningful learning and learning process.

### **Effect of Puzzle Programme in the Development of Cognitive and Creative Abilities among Pre-school Children**

N. SHAKUNTHALA MANAY, T. C. SHOBHA RANI

The study had its roots in Aurobindo's philosophy of holistic education for the development of the child's potentialities and capacities. The main concern of this exploratory study was to (i) develop a low cost indigenous puzzle programme for developing the left and the right brain faculties, (ii) to study the effectiveness of educative puzzles in the development of cognitive and creative abilities of children.

The study employed a pre-test-post-test design. The sample constituted of 240 children between ages 30-36 months, studying in eight pre-schools of Bangalore. Data were collected with the help of a descriptive rating tool evaluating concepts like shape, size, colour, alphabet, mathematics, language, logical thinking and creativity. School index was used for selection of schools. The scores were analyzed using 't' test.

Forty two indigenous puzzles were developed in hierarchical order and were also suitably adopted to rhymes and charts. The findings of the study revealed that students exposed to the puzzle programme performed better on cognitive and creative faculties. The findings had implications for use of educative play materials like puzzles in the cognitive development of children.

### **Activity Based Classroom Transaction A Case Study**

MEERA CHOPRA

The study sought answers to questions related to the development of fear of mathematics in children. Some major concerns of the study were (i) to design indigenous activities and curricular materials in mathematics to provide opportunity for spontaneous, non-

standard symbolic representation transit of formal representation system, (ii) to correlate situation and problems which evoked mathematization, (iii) to encourage alternate ways of conceptualization, and (iv) to integrate different curricular areas.

Data were collected on a school sample of 133 students of Class I. The strategies employed in transaction of concepts were (i) thematic approach, (ii) freedom of thought and expression, and (iii) learning how to learn. The areas covered in the study were related to numbers, shapes and space, patterns, number operations, place value, multiplication, measurement, time estimation and money. The study was conducted in two stages. Stage I provided baseline data on each child's learning, capability and problem areas. Stage II was primarily concerned with development and designing of activities and games, which were modified after field testing.

The main findings of the study indicate (i) above 90 per cent students were able to master the required skills and abilities, and (ii) baseline survey helped teachers in understanding the level of each child.

The study advocated the use of activities, games and concrete manipulands in acquisition of mathematical concepts. In view of the above the curriculum planners and practitioners need to relook into learner based, activity oriented alternatives for the transaction of mathematical concepts.

### **Observations by the Chairperson**

The papers presented in this session brought out different aspects of the teaching-learning process bringing the professionals and others working in the field of primary education closer to classroom activity.

Activity based learning approach improved interactions between the teacher and the pupil on one hand and increased self motivation in children on the other.

It was not the textbooks and syllabus that became a hindrance for creative activities as suggested in some of the papers but on the contrary, lack of resources was a bigger problem than anything else.

**Introduction by Shri R.S.Pandey, Joint Secretary,  
DPEP to the Book *Reaching Out Further Para  
Teachers in Primary Education : An Overview*  
by Shri Yogendra Singh and His Team of  
Bodh Shiksha Samiti, Jaipur**

Hon'ble Minister, Respected Education Secretary, Respected Director, NCERT, distinguished scholars, ladies and gentlemen.

Let me briefly sequence what led to this publication which is to be released by the Hon'ble Minister shortly. DPEP has the mandate to bring about Univerzalisation of Primary Education in the districts in which it operates in a given time frame. Realizing that mere provision of brick and mortar and positioning of teachers in the schools alone do not necessarily constitute the conditions sufficient for universalization and realizing that a number of innovative programmes based on inquiries, information researches were initiated in DPEP, documentation in research has been placed on a high point in the DPEP agenda. When we evaluated the programme after three years of its working a few months back we were very happy to find that enrolments are growing much faster, repetition rates are coming down in the districts where DPEP is working to the extent even more than 50 percent, learning achievements are looking up, classroom performances seem to be improving. Nevertheless, several concerns have been brought to our notice and these are that with the given amount of money which is foreseeable for us, we cannot really universalize education even in the districts where we are operating unless we take to certain innovative measures, cost cutting measures, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the schools bringing about change in the attitudes of the teachers, involving the community in a very meaningful way, integrating into Panchayati Raj structures and that has led to our laying our hands on some of the information documents which are available conducting some of the researches that give us real insight into these problems. Now, one such effort was looking at the context of para teachers operating in this country. This country has experimented with although on a small scale. Now DPEP has tried to replicate on a slightly bigger scale and before we take a leap into the future and our Hon'ble Minister had been encouraging us to look at innovative ways in which very cost effectively we can bring about universalization in this country which is the constitutional mandate and I am sure this exercise which is it is a two part book. The first part which is being released today will give us an overview



of what really obtains in this country in various programmes under the NGO sector, the various State Governments have undertaken within DPEP and outside DPEP about the position of para teachers. The second volume will talk about research aspect. The insights as to what should really be done under the research which is in the offing a lot of work has been done about another cost cutting exercise of bringing about double shifting in schools, where double shift can work, where it does not work, where it leads to quality, where it does not lead to quality etc. We are also working on how to bring about an interface with the Community Raj structure so that the community can be meaningfully involved. With these few words I request you Hon'ble Minister to honour us by releasing this book.

### *Technical Session V*

## **Management of Learning in Large-sized Classes**

THIS SESSION was held from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. on 16 July 1998 and was chaired by Andrew Burke.

In addition to the lead presentation on the theme 'Management of Learning in Large Sized Classes' by Prof. Kuldeep Kumar, the following papers were presented

- Learning Organization and the Effectiveness of Primary Education in Lesotho : A Case Study of Roma Primary Schools
- Activity Based Teaching Learning Strategies (ABTS) in a Large Sized Class at Primary Stage—A Study
- Teaching Environmental Studies in Large Size Primary Classes: Evaluation of Some Practices
- Instructional and Management Practices in Large Size Classes: Reflection on Classroom Strategies.

While introducing the theme of the session the lead presenter Prof. Kuldeep Kumar raised some basic issues which according to him should be looked into in the context of large sized classes.

- How large should a class be for it to be called a large size class?
- Who was the manager of a large size class? The teacher or a head teacher (who had to look after both academic and non-academic matters) at the primary stage?
- How could we define the concept of management of learning in the context of large sized classes? Like a manager, did the teacher have to only manage resources or did she/he have to manage learning? In the latter case, she/he had to be familiar with the pedagogical principles as well as the principles of child development.
- How could we define child centred approach? What model does a teacher need to follow as child centred approach can be defined in many ways? How could this approach be used

in a class where the number of children went upto 80 to 100?

The lead presenter suggested that there was a need to dovetail the main objective of primary education with the stated objectives of the DPEP (i.e. enrolment, retention and quality achievement). The child centred approach of teaching-learning needed to be defined in functional terms that could be understood by primary school teachers. He concluded by emphasizing on working out functional teaching-learning strategies in the context of large sized classrooms.

### **Learning Organization and the Effectiveness of Primary Education in Lesotho: A Case Study of Roma Primary Schools**

**T. MPHUTHI, O. A. ADEOLA**

THE STUDY was conducted to find out (i) the nature of learning organizational problems in primary schools in the Roma valley area of Lesotho, and (ii) to examine strategies being adopted to solve learning organizational problems.

The study was conducted in five primary schools located in Roma Valley. Data was collected using questionnaire, interview schedule and observation. Data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively.

The study revealed that overcrowded classrooms, inadequate school facilities, truancy and irregular attendance of pupils, lack of cooperation of parents, poor performance of pupils in English, multi-level teaching and irregular inspection of schools were some of the problems which were affecting school effectiveness. The study also highlighted some of the strategies being adopted to address these problems which included use of guidance and counselling techniques by teachers, strict monitoring and supervision of teachers by head teacher and syndicate meetings of head teachers with staff and community. These strategies were found ineffective and short termed.

The study has suggested some measures to provide long term solution to the problem i.e. reducing teacher-pupil ratio, active involvement of parents and the community in school programmes, use of attendance card, more frequent supervision of school and organizing fund raising activities.

## **Activity-based Teaching-Learning Strategies (ABTS) in a Large Sized Class at the Primary Stage : A Study**

M. SHARADA

The study aimed at studying whether ABTS are equally effective in large sized classes at the primary stage. The study was basically qualitative in nature conducted in action research mode. Seventy children who were studying in Class IV in Demonstration School, RIE, Mysore constituted the sample. A few competencies were taken up from three topics of Environmental Studies - II to transact through ABTS. Observation, classification, role play, peer group learning, discussion, demonstration, experimentation, project work, self-learning and quiz were some of the strategies used in the teaching-learning process. Rote memorization was totally discouraged and learning by doing was encouraged. Children were evaluated for their performance through teachers' observation record, oral question - answers and competency based tests.

The major outcomes of the study were that (i) the pupils enjoyed 'learning by doing', (ii) ABTS were very effective and helped the learner in concept attainment and ability development in a large sized class also.

The study concluded that activities involving children in the teaching-learning process motivated the child to learn better and hence led to retention and achievement.

## **Teaching Environmental Studies in Large Size Primary Classes : Evaluation of Some Practices**

M. K. SATAPATHY

The study was conducted to evaluate five common approaches i.e. lecture method (separately with and without disturbing student position), demonstration method, activity method and group work method to find out their effectiveness in teaching EVS-II in large size classes.

The study was carried out in five upper primary schools of Jaipur Education District of Orissa. Only Classes III and V were taken for sample. The number of students varied from 35 to 49 in the selected classes. Each method was assigned to a class randomly.

Multiple choice, objective type tests were used to assess pupils' achievement. 't' test was applied to find out significance of difference between the mean scores of pre-test and post-test, and the percentage



of increase in scores in the post-test over the pretest was compared by DMRT among the methods.

'Activity based approach' of teaching by putting students in a circle outside the class was found to be a most effective method to teach EVS-II followed by demonstration method. However, no significant difference was found between the two. 'Group work' with a team leader and lecture method were not found very effective in the present study.

The study suggests that the teachers should be given orientation/ training in teaching EVS II through activity based approach in large size classes.

### **Instructional and Management Practices in Large Size Classes : Reflection on Classroom Strategies**

PRANATI PANDA

The paper attempted to study (i) the prevalent classroom instructional and management strategies followed by teachers of large size classes, and (ii) to study the problems faced by the teachers of large-size classes.

The study was essentially a field based study using qualitative research techniques. The sample consisted of 15 MCD primary schools of Delhi located in resettlement colonies and slums. The study was limited to Classes III and IV on the basis of the number of pupils ranging from 60-80. Classroom observation, semistructured interviews and focus group discussion were used as tools to observe classroom practices.

The study revealed that a large number of innovative strategies were being practised by teachers teaching large sized classes. The strategies used by teachers differed from subject to subject and even from topic to topic. Peer tutoring, group work, monitorial assistance, team teaching and self help were some of the strategies used by teachers teaching in large sized classes.

A few innovative seating arrangements were adopted by teachers in utilizing the available infrastructural facilities which facilitated teachers in organizing group work, peer tutoring and for teaching effectively. The study concluded that a single prescription will not resolve this critical issue. Hence an integrated model has been suggested to strengthen the inbuilt strategies. The study also suggested that both pre-service and in-service teacher training should address the pedagogical needs of teachers teaching in large sized classes.

### **Observations on Presentation of Technical Session V**

- Studies needed to be conducted in real, large sized classrooms as the findings of the study conducted in simulated settings might not be applicable to real classrooms
- The optimal size of a class for proper development of a child's personality had to be decided on the basis of research evidence.
- Strategies used in large sized classes to teach EVS II needed to be studied further before making generalizations.
- Effectiveness of group work in the context of a large sized rural sample could be further studied.

In his concluding remarks, the Chairperson strongly recommended that no single prescription could be suggested for teaching in large sized classes keeping in view the complexity of our classroom situations. Through questioning technique the teachers could individualize teaching in large sized classes. He was of the view that though class size affects effective teaching, it should not be used as an excuse for bad teaching.

## *Technical Session VI*

# **School Climate and Effectiveness**

TECHNICAL SESSION VI was conducted in the afternoon (2.30 - 4.15 pm) on 16 July 1998 with Dr Mervi Karikorpi of the European Commission, New Delhi, in the Chair. Besides the lead presentation by Dr Sharada Jain of Sadhana Research Centre, Jaipur on 'The Meaning of School Climate', the following four papers were presented in the session.

- School Climate and Effectiveness in Contexts of Stringency
- Role of NGO in UEE — A Case Study of Agragamee
- Teacher Freezing : A Threat to School Effectiveness
- A Tool for Ongoing Participatory Road Mapping of the Organizational Development of Educational Institutions

The lead presentation on the Meaning of School Climate by Sharada Jain attempted to clarify the conceptual meaning of school climate and its relationship with school effectiveness. The presentation began with clarifications regarding the meaning of concept itself.

To the presenter, a concept codified experience and in order to derive meaning out of it, the same needed to be decoded in terms of personal experiences. She also mentioned that the concepts of school climate and effectiveness were more tangible, direct and measurable.

Dwelling upon the concept of climate, she opined that climate was an environmental concept which when discussed in the context of education took different meanings. The school climate could be harsh, gentle, warm, oppressive, suppressive, open, stiff, and so forth. When these concepts were used in educational settings, they did not describe the situation, rather they described the feel of the situation — the feel the children experienced. To strengthen her argument, she narrated three field experiences related to school situations.

The presenter was of the view that it was the feel which opened out someone and facilitated learning. It was this learning which developed confidence among individuals, which in turn generated

humility. Humility led to openness which resulted in more learning. The cycle thus went on. It was therefore, the non-cognitive factor (i.e. feeling) which determined learning to a large extent.

### **School Climate and Effectiveness in Contexts of Stringency**

LYNN DAVIES

The presentation was based on the findings reported in a book, entitled *School Management and Effectiveness in Developing Countries* by Harber and Davies (1997), and also on three unpublished studies conducted in Brazil, Uganda and Pakistan. Reviewing what made primary schools relatively more effective in constrained economic circumstances, the presenter highlighted two significant features of effective schools : Flexibility and Democracy. Elaborating on the concept of flexibility, it was reported that flexibility was required in terms of (a) timing and place for schooling, bringing education to the learner at times and places appropriate to them, (b) self-instructional or guided materials, (c) using a variety of teachers, and (d) use of criterion-referenced assessments. The concept of democracy covered things like children's participation in decision-making that affected them, focus on learner-centred learning, and collaborative learning.

The presentation advocated combining flexibility and democracy as a measure of school effectiveness. That was what school ought to emphasize on learning to make choices among students. In a flexible, democratic system of schooling, children participated equally in deciding the rules and procedures, and in deciding the ways in which these should be implemented. Thus, assessment of a truly effective primary school needed a very different style of effectiveness research focussing on different types of indicators of effectiveness.

### **Role of NGO in UEE : A Case Study of Agramee**

P.K.DAS, V K SUNWANI

The study described the role of an NGO, named Agramee, in developing an innovative model of primary education for tribals of Orissa. For this, a case study of Agramee was conducted involving interview, observation and other indirect methods. The data were analyzed qualitatively.

It was reported that Agramee had successfully developed a sustainable model of education for tribals of Orissa. The main characteristics of the models were as follows.



1. Integration of rich tribal culture and tradition into the programmes developed by Agramee.
2. Agramee had offered a multi-pronged integrated and practical approach of development,
3. Supervision of VEC by an elderly person from the community,
4. Relating curriculum to income generation activities,
5. Integration of education with the tribal culture, and
6. Production of teaching-learning materials locally.

It was argued that with a little modification, the Agramee model could be adapted in other areas. Also, involvement of the community, particularly the women, would be essential for successful implementation of any programme.

### **Teacher Freezing : A Threat to School Effectiveness**

HASEEN TAJ

The study was designed to examine the impact of teacher freezing on elementary schools, academic performance and teacher effectiveness. Two hundred elementary school students and 125 teachers from different types of schools participated in the scale. They were administered a 'Teacher Freezing Scale'. Also, the academic achievement of students and the effectiveness of teachers were assessed. The data were subjected to 't' test and correlation coefficients.

Results showed that academic achievement of students was negatively correlated with teacher freezing. Higher teacher freezing was also negatively associated with teacher effectiveness. The study concluded that to enhance school effectiveness, teacher freezing should be reduced.

### **A Tool for Ongoing Participatory Road Mapping of the Organizational Development of Educational Institutions**

ELIZABETH MEHTA, E. R. PRASAD

The paper advocated the use of a road mapping tool in the school-based development in the management process of DPEP.

The presenter mentioned that the Road Mapping Tool had been

developed after its pilot testing for eight years of school-based development work. Initially the tool had eleven parameters which were later merged into four key parameters, i.e. structure, systems, people, and process. The tool was based on the principle that the development was to be viewed as multidimensional and not an all-or-nothing situation.

The tool has also been tried out in the presenters' organisation – the Aga Khan Education Service, India. The presenter opined that the tool, with further tuning, could be used for monitoring the DPEP programme. Participatory mode of working at every level in the DPEP organizational structure would bring in the required relative autonomy at the village level.

The utilization of the tool involves the following five stages:

- (i) identification of levels in the structure for participatory self-appraisal;
- (ii) organization of forums to conduct participatory assessment of organization development;
- (iii) consensus building on the perceived stage of growth and development on each parameter;
- (iv) implementation of action plans, and
- (v) second cycle of the tool for reviewing of progress.

It was cautioned that an organization would not be able to work on all parameters with equal pace and it was through these parameters that the developmental stage of an organization was determined.

#### **Observations on Presentations of Technical Session VI**

- The Chairperson remarked that this session had witnessed rich discussion with regard to the very purpose of primary education, as well as learning by children, teachers, parents and institutions.
- As regards the study on teacher freezing, issues related to the type of rating scale used and its comprehensibility by primary children, relevance of correlating birth order of children with their perception of teacher freezing, and the ways to minimize teacher freezing were raised.
- The clarifications regarding ways to improve school climate were put forward.

The session ended with a vote of thanks by the Chairperson to the paper presenters and the participants.

*Technical Session VII : Panel Discussion*

## **Learning Organization and School Effectiveness**

CHAIRPERSON : S.C.BEHAR

PANELISTS : A.N.MAHESHWARI, N.K.JANGIRA, C.S. SESHADRI

THE FIRST two panelists highlighted the contextuality of education while the third panelist discussed how learning could be organized. The substantive issues discussed were as follows.

### **A.N.MAHESHWARI**

- Highlighted the contextual and functional nature of the Indian system of education till the late eighteenth century, and also stressed the role of the colonial system of education in creating demarcation and differentiation among individuals.
- Who was to design a contextualized, need based system?
- Drawing examples from the Basic Education System of Gandhiji the advantages were :
  - learners developed skills around their local craft;
  - holistic education, i.e. catering to the mind, body and soul;
  - lesson plans were indigenous consisting of formation of TATLI, which involved knowledge of maths, physics, geography, agriculture etc;
  - attempted to integrate different subject areas.

### **N.K.JANGIRA**

- Focussed on contextualizing school effectiveness in the Indian context.
- Provided a vision of an effective school. The various aspects of which were :
  - it was effective for all children;
  - was an inclusive school responsive to the diverse needs of children;

- was able to attract, enrol, retain all children till the end of the primary stage;
  - helped children to participate in developing goals of their education;
  - helped all children to learn the basic numeracy, literacy and life skills;
  - children learned the skills of learning to learn;
  - children enjoyed and participated in the school program.
- Different types of schools and their respective organizational structures were depicted.

### **C. S. SESHADRI**

Prof. C.S. Seshadri provided an insightful deliberation on how learning could be organized and what the fundamental questions the educationists and practitioners needed to ask were, before concretizing the goal of organizing learning. Some of the questions that were raised are as under.

- Could learning be organized in a manner that would not alienate the learner from life, would rather establish a link with life or, at least, would reduce the distance between life outside and classroom learning?
- Could it be built around the central concern of eradication of poverty and all that it entailed by way of empowerment—knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values?
- Could it be built around those concerns which the learners found immediate and urgent?

Prof Seshadri reiterated that not only could learning be organized in this manner but it also had to be so organized if it were to serve its real purpose. Besides, doing so it would fulfil a necessary requirement to attain the professed objective of basic education in letter and spirit.

Contextualization as an organizing principle of learning had to be seen in the overall context of macro-system factors, especially those concerning how the society and parents perceived the objectives of primary schooling. Even in the present day, certification and examination requirements dictated practically all education processes. As long as the concern did not shift from verbalization and memorization with the emphasis on scoring well in examinations, to understanding, knowing, problem solving skills and application of knowledge in practical situations, the need for locating learning in the relevant context would not be felt by the teachers, parents



and the community. Besides, the goal of empowerment would remain unfulfilled.

### **Discussion**

Even though there were few merits in the education system of the past, the same could not be uncritically accepted. Prof. V. Verma reiterated that the educational system of the nineteenth century was highly discriminating and casteist. The process was dis-empowering because of the way the learning and knowledge were contextualized.

The deliberations largely focussed on what should constitute contextualizing education. Some thoughts were as follows.

- The need to redefine the concept of general education in the light of the upcoming concept of primary education for empowerment of the poor.
- Could education for all be achieved in a multigrade school context or was there a need for one teacher to one school?
- Interdisciplinary research inputs needed to be given to the education of the child.
- Evaluation of the child by the adult hindered the full development of the child's capacities and potentialities.
- Deliberations on contextualization focussed on its nature, nomenclature and issues like
  - was empowerment of the poor contextualization?
  - did empowerment mean helping in terms of knowledge and skills?
  - empowerment should mean giving power and responsibility especially to the teacher, in order to get results.
- Relating child's learning to the craft of their livelihood would help bridge the gap between child's learning at home and in school
- Slogans like 'Education for All' seemed to have camouflaged the problem, rather than solved it.

### **Summing Up by the Chairperson**

- Mechanics of education had become more important than the philosophy.
- Learning, apart from cognition should include feelings (affective domain).
- What was taught in school was equally important as what

was caught, which was largely based on the norms, values and beliefs on which the school was based.

- Certain basic concessions needed to be made to Gandhiji's philosophy so as to suit the education of today.
- DPEP could achieve its purpose if it were reoriented and reorganized to Gandhian philosophy rather than to Western thought.

### *Technical Session VIII*

## **Community and School Management**

TECHNICAL SESSION VIII was held in the morning (9.30 to 11.00 a.m.) of 17 July 1998 with Lynn Davies from the University of Birmingham in the Chair. Ralph W. Harbison of World Bank, New Delhi made the lead presentation on 'Factors Affecting School Effectiveness'. In addition, the following three papers were presented in the session.

- The Effects and Costs of Community Participation : Results of the Primary Education Improvement Project
- Combating School Dysfunctionality through Community Mobilization : Case Study of a Rural School
- Community Participation in Primary Education and School Effectiveness

The lead presenter, Ralph W. Harbison, discussed a conceptual framework incorporating factors that determined school effectiveness. It was claimed that this model had been very useful in all situations (i.e. rural/urban, developing and developed countries). However, it might be appropriate to adapt the model to suit the local conditions.

The model incorporated input, output and process variables. Under the input variables, the model discussed the supporting input (such as strong parent - community support, effective support the education system, and adequate material support), and children's characteristics. The process variables were dealt with under three subheads : school climate, enabling conditions, and teaching-learning process. The output variables were primarily related to student outcomes which included variables like participation, academic achievement, social skills and economic success. The student outcomes were observed to be dependent on contextual factors such as international, cultural, political and economic contexts.

**Effects and Costs of Community  
Participation : Results of the Primary Education  
Quality Improvement Project**

BERT CREEMERS, GREETJE VAN DER WERF

The study analyzed the effects and costs of community participation initiatives in the Primary Education Quality Improvement Project (PEQIP) in Indonesia with the effects and costs of other activities in the project.

The presentation began by defining the concept of community participation which included mutual collaboration, support and participation of families, community members and agencies and school staff, at the school or in the community which might have a bearing on student outcomes. An integrated school effectiveness model (PEQIP) was described. The model took into account the school and classroom level variables, indicators of effective schools, local context of schools, teachers and pupils.

The study was conducted in 54 PEQIP schools and 28 controlled schools in two provinces of Indonesia. It was reported that PEQIP had effects only in one province and the effects were observed only with respect to the children's achievement in the Indonesian language and science. The effects were attributed to the quality of teaching in the classrooms. The community participation had only small impact. The study reported strong impact of teacher professional development component. The author, however, observed that training of teachers was an expensive measure. In contrast, community participation, though its effects were small, is more cost-effective. Also, the type of community involvement was reported to be more significant than the amount and frequency of community involvement.

The community participation was advocated as a useful initiative to improve the quality of education in developing countries.

**Combating School Dysfunctionality through  
Community Mobilization: Case Study  
of a Rural School**

N.M.RAO

The study highlighted the importance of community participation in enhancing school effectiveness by motivating the dormant youth of the village. The study reported the rise and fall of a village school in the State of Karnataka and the efforts of the village population,



particularly youth, in combating dysfunctionality of the school.

The presentation commenced with a description of the village school and the presenter's personal involvement with the school since its inception. It was observed that a school which was functioning well in the beginning became dysfunctional due to teacher-related factors. In order to make the school functional, the author involved a band of energetic and idealistic youth of the village who were otherwise unconcerned with the state of affairs of the school. The youths persuaded the elders of the village to actively involve themselves in the management of the school. Thus, a Village Education Committee (VEC) was constituted. The VEC began its functioning by solving the teacher-related problems. Also, persons from the local community were appointed as para-teachers.

By implication, it was reported that the case of the present school demonstrated how an indifferent and apathetic community could be mobilized towards constructive educational actions by its own youth as agents of improvement.

### **Community Participation in Primary Education and School Effectiveness**

SATENDER KUMAR

The study examined the contribution of the community in the primary schools of Baroda in terms of their establishment, finance and management. It also studied the association of community participation with school effectiveness.

For examining the contribution of the community in establishment and finance, all 372 primary schools located in the city of Baroda were included in the study. The school effectiveness was examined in 50 schools selected through stratified random sampling. The following tools were developed for use in the study.

- (i) A questionnaire for Principals
- (ii) A semi-structured interview schedule for administrative officers and trustees of the school management board.

Data related to community participation were analyzed qualitatively. Data related to school effectiveness were subjected to quantitative analysis.

It was reported that about 56 per cent schools in the city of Baroda were managed privately without any financial aid from the government. In community schools, the management of the school was being looked into by a trust. The role of the parent-teacher

association was limited to discussing their wards' performance with the teachers. About 176 voluntary organizations were contributing to the field of primary education in various ways. A positive correlation between community participation and school effectiveness was reported. It was observed that schools serving the higher strata of the society could achieve greater community participation whereas schools serving the lower strata of the society could achieve the same in the school activities. In the case of the latter, even the resources and ability to participate in the school activities were lacking.

It was advocated that formation of PTAs in the schools should be initiated and committed persons from the community, who could work as resource persons, be identified and invited to deliver talks to the primary school teachers. This would be helpful in enhancing the professional growth of children. Also, the schools facing the problems of absenteeism and first generation learners could reduce these problems to a large extent by community involvement.

#### **Observations on Presentations of Technical Session VIII**

- Related to the Indonesian study a number of issues were raised. These related to the non-impact of teaching-learning material, negative impact of home work and parental involvement, effect of community participation only on a specific group of participants, etc.
- As regards the model presented by the lead presenter, it was felt that socio-political and economic contexts should also have been incorporated in the model.
- Issues related to the indicators of school effectiveness were raised in case of the Baroda study.

### *Technical Session IX*

## **Community Participation and School Effectiveness**

THE SESSION was chaired by Prof. C.Seshadri. In addition to the lead presentation on the theme 'Community Participation and School Effectiveness' by Prof. M.S.Yadav, the following papers were presented.

- Community Participation and Resource Mobilization for Educational Development of Minorities
- A Study of the Relationship between Community Participation and School Effectiveness

Prof. M.S.Yadav, while on his lead presentation, said that there was a long history of community participation in educational processes both in pre- and post-independent India. Therefore, instead of addressing the issue of community participation afresh, it would be better to reformulate the question—how to restore community involvement in the context of universalizing and decentralizing educational processes. The lead presenter contended that the nature of the community underwent constant changes as the village education committee had been functioning in a very fluid socio-political context. In this light the research paradigm and the perspectives needed corresponding changes.

The deliberation also focussed on the issue of contextualization of education and community participation. It was felt that in the context of DPEP, the objective of involvement of the community in educational processes was very important. A strong need was felt for joint venture by the researchers and practitioners.

### **A Study of the Relationship between Community Participation and School Effectiveness**

K.GANESWARA RAO

The twin objectives of the study were to first find out the schools where community participation was on the higher side, and second,

to study the relationship of community participation with overall development of the school, school enrolment, achievement level of the students, and teacher motivation. An additional objective was also to study the difference in the nature of community participation between rural and urban area schools.

The sample of the study included headmasters from 103 schools in Bhima Varan Mandal West Godawari Distt. in Andhra Pradesh. Two inventories were developed and used: one to measure community participation and the other to measure school effectiveness. Personal interview schedule was also used for obtaining detailed information. Data were codified and product moment coefficients of correlation were calculated to find out relationships between variables. Statistical tools like 't' tests, percentages, averages and SDs were used.

The study established a link between community participation and school effectiveness. Community participation was found to be higher in urban schools than in rural schools. Community participation in schools headed by lady teachers was less. The Headmasters welcomed community involvement in the physical aspects of the school but resented supervision of the schools by the community. A significant positive correlation was observed between community participation and school enrolment.

The results provided a strong case for optimizing community participation in rural area schools in order to make the system more effective and functional.

### **Community Participation and Resource Mobilization for Educational Development of Minorities**

MOHD. MUZAMMIL

The research is a case study of Pilibhit District in Uttar Pradesh. Using survey method, data was collected from five villages in Muslim dominated blocks of Amaria and Bilaspur and the Sikh dominated Puranpur Blocks. A total of 2,352 households of Muslims and 117 households of Sikhs comprised the sample of the study. Comparative analysis of the data was carried out between the two minority populations.

The study provides a profile of District Pilibhit (U.P.) in relation to the socio-economic status and educational status of two minority communities i.e. the Muslims and the Sikhs.

The investigation helped to establish the positive link between



property ownership and community commitment and educational performance of the children of Muslims and Sikhs. Poor land ownership and low profile of job have shown to hinder effective education of Muslim children and stronger rural base with large land holdings of Sikhs with greater community commitment resulted in better performance of their children. The study concludes that Waqf properties of Muslims had not been effectively utilized for the cause of education, while the gurudwara schools had played a better role. The findings of the study suggested providing of educational instruction in the vernacular (Urdu) at the primary stage.

### **Observations on Presentation of Technical Session IX**

The participants observed that community ownership was the legacy of the pre-colonial period. Community organization and mobilization needed to be seen in the light of common programmes undertaken. There was, however, a need to look into the operational dimensions of community participation and mobilization.

The educationists and planners had placed very little trust in VEC and the work which was being assigned to VEC under DPEP. The role of VEC even today remained outside the classroom processes. The empowerment of VEC cannot be achieved in the present state of continuing bureaucratic control under DPEP. However, it was apprehended that a greater amount of control by VEC of the educational processes might lead to exploitation of teachers with a political motive.

The deliberations also focussed on the interchangeable use of concepts like community participation, community involvement and community ownership without articulating each one of them sufficiently. The nature of participation of certain communities like the SC, ST and minorities needed to be looked into from a socio-historical perspective.

*Technical Session X : Panel Discussion*

## **Community Participation and School Effectiveness**

CHAIRPERSON : A.K. SHARMA

PANELISTS : S.C. BEHAR, ANIL SADGOPAL, SUSHANT E. HIRSHBERG

THE CHAIRPERSON of the panel discussion invited Prof. Anil Sadgopal after a briefing on the importance of Community Participation as an important component of the School Effectiveness Programme.

**ANIL SADGOPAL**

Speaking on community participation, he opined that parents took a keen interest in the education of their wards as substantiated by the literature in the sociology of education. He stated in clear terms that the relationship between the school and the community was weak as the schools were run by the government and the community had no role to play. In fact the sense of belonging by the community did not prevail.

He made clear assertions about the focal theme of the panel discussion wherein he stated that

1. decentralization in the true sense would occur only when the community asserted itself in the planning and management of the school functioning;
2. the community needed to participate in the development of curriculum reflecting the true aspirations of the people;
3. education should also help the children to do better than the parents in traditional schools.

He felt that diversity of cultures needed to be valued, but how it was to be dealt with was a big question. He felt deep concern about not giving the right kind of powers to the Panchayat Raj system. He concluded by saying that decentralization and community participation were different names of the same process.

**S.C.BEHAR**

The curriculum began with the assumption that the child did not know anything when he/she came to school implying thereby that

the community was not a learning organization. Speaking on the focal theme, he stated that the concept of school itself negates community and learning takes place in the community and not in the school. He advocated the use of "community ownership" as a better terminology than "community participation". According to him, community meant a group of people with emotional bonds, and learning, as we see in schools, was more of a cognitive activity. Hence, school effectiveness could not be achieved unless schools became emotionally palatable.

He asserted that the Panchayat was not a community but the whole village was a community. He advocated that in order to have community control, freedom should be given to the community.

Talking about the implications of school effectiveness he asserted that

1. It should imply that all children learn to their maximum potential inside and outside the school.
2. The school should be continued as an emotive centre wherein there was equitable participation of the learners in the learning activities.
3. The school management should be conducive for the growth of children
4. Schools were not to be confined to the learning activity but must extend themselves for socio-cultural activities of the community.

While speaking on school effectiveness he raised the following questions related to the assumptions mentioned above.

1. Who was going to control the school? The teacher, the community or the government?
2. The community was not a homogenous entity and this may affect its participation. How should its participation be taken care of?

#### **SUSAN HIRSEBERG**

In her opening remarks she said that 'decentralization' was a 'hollow word' and community participation was only possible if the community was empowered with needed resources. Community participation needed to ensure

1. *Access* : for-hard-to-reach children, e.g. girls, learning disabled, tribal children, etc.
2. *Efficiency* : by reducing dropout and mobilizing resources for effective deployment of teachers.

3. *Quality* : improvement by targetting better teacher-student interaction.

She concluded by saying that community participation would produce greater learning than the conventional system and this should be a part of comprehensive strategies of school effectiveness. She said

1. Community participation was advantageous for the management of the disadvantaged.
2. Community participation in the absence of technical professional support was not complete by itself.
3. Demands existed for education but the government had not been able to meet the same and therefore community participation was essential.
4. Community participation facilitated the formation of a civil society, strengthened the school stability and enabled the restoration of democratic values.

The panel discussion created a lot of enthusiasm among the panelists as well as the audience and this generated a few questions for which clarification were sought. These were clarified after the presentation by the panelists.



## **POSTER SESSION**

The following three studies were depicted through posters displayed near the reception counter.

**Learning Achievement of Children Studying in  
Alternative Schools of DPEP districts of Madhya Pradesh**  
*V.P. Gupta*

**Effectiveness of the Strategies in Developing Map-reading  
Skills in Large Size Class at the Primary Stage : A Study**  
*T.V. Lalitha*

**Enhancing Learning School Language of Disadvantaged  
Learners through the Use of Home Language  
in Multigrade Schools**  
*Premalata Sharma*

## Valedictory Session

### Highlights of the Address of Shri Anand Sarup

IN HIS valedictory address, Shri Anand Sarup said that the whole world had undergone a change, so whatever framework we wished to create should be based on the needs of the people. He stressed that the NPE 1986 should be reviewed to find out its validity in today's context. In his opinion India was far away from attaining the goal of UEE and the progress of primary education was not satisfactory in many regions of the country.

He further emphasized that educational and economic backwardness went together and economically backward areas with low literacy had low Human Resource Development indicators. He added that if we wanted to improve education we had to find out solutions for economic backwardness. Moreover, it might not be possible to provide good jobs to the unlettered masses in the future.

He stressed that we should stop blaming the British for our illiteracy as not much had been changed even after 50 years of independence. He added that every child should have equitable access to primary education of comparable quality. He opined that the real problem was neither of organizational restructuring of pedagogic strategies nor even of curriculum design or paucity of resources, but the real problem lay in socio-economic ecology. He further added that unless the prime movers (policy makers and stake holders) had a sense of urgency and a will for improving education, things would not improve.

He expressed his satisfaction and happiness about the discussions held during different sessions which had gone beyond the limits of the text in the papers.

He agreed that DPEP was successful in improving access, enrolment and in reducing the inequality between the general category and the Scheduled Castes. However, the problem of drop out was yet to be solved fully by DPEP planners through viable models. He suggested that a critical overview of the DPEP programme highlighting its overall impact, its success and failure was needed to be presented in a seminar like this.

### **Highlights of the Address of Dr Roopa Joshi**

Dr Joshi said that the seminar had been extremely constructive for the DPEP Bureau particularly for implementing its guidelines and getting the feedback. She added that 'Community Participation' the sub-theme for the seminar was the core of all DPEP activities and was redefined in DPEP activities. She explained that it included 'school ownership' and 'monitoring of schools' by the community. She apprised the delegates of DPEP activities in generating awareness about community participation through awareness campaigns. She also informed the participants about the training given by DPEP to the community for improving its participation in education especially at the primary level. She further added that DPEP had started formulating village based plans for community participation.

She endorsed the view that DPEP did appreciate research based feedback through seminars like this to improve its functioning. She concluded that in the next seminar opportunities could be given to people working in DPEP areas to present their own experiences based on what they had done over a period of time under DPEP.

### **Vote of Thanks by Prof. A.N.Maheshwari**

The Joint Director, NCERT, Prof. A.N.Maheshwari extended a vote of thanks at the Valedictory function of the fourth International Seminar. He appreciated the efforts of Prof. Ved Prakash and his team and many others for helping him to successfully organize the seminar.

He thanked the Hon'ble Minister Prof. Murli Manohar Joshi for having spared his valuable time and for sharing his views on improving primary education in India on the second day of the seminar. He also expressed his deep thanks to the Education Secretary, Shri P.R.Dasgupta, for having graced the seminar along with the Minister.

He thanked Shri Anand Sarup for having accepted the invitation for addressing the participants in the valedictory function of the seminar. He appreciated the Chief Guest's genuine interest regarding primary education and his frank, candid views which inspired the participants to a great extent.

He extended his thanks to the participants from overseas for their participation and for their genuine interest in primary education.

He sincerely acknowledged the immense contribution of

Dr Gautam, Dr Bansal and Smt. Bhalla for silently working day and night and shouldering multifarious activities along with Prof. Ved Prakash. He also thanked the secretarial staff for helping in the preparation of conference papers and other miscellaneous activities.

Last of all, he acknowledged the tremendous support and faith that Prof. A.K.Sharma had reposed in him and his colleagues for organizing the seminar.

He wished all the participants and delegates a safe journey back home, with the hope of seeing many of them again at the next seminar.



**International Seminar on Researches in  
Learning Organization, Community Participation  
and School Effectiveness at the Primary Stage  
15-17 July 1998**

**Venue: Conference Hall 'E', Vigyan Bhawan Annexe  
Maulana Azad Road, New Delhi**

**Programme**

**15 JULY**

09.00 hrs - 10.00 hrs	Registration
10.00 hrs - 11.00 hrs	Inaugural Session
Welcome	Prof. A.K.Sharma Director National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi
Inaugural Address	Text of the Inaugural Address of the Hon'ble Minister Human Resource Development read by the Director, NCERT
Vote of Thanks	Prof. A.N.Maheshwari Joint Director National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi
Rapporteurs	N.N. Prahallada C.G.V. Murthy Anita Julka
1100 hrs - 1130 hrs	<b>Tea/Coffee</b>
1130 hrs - 1330 hrs	<b>Technical Session 1</b>
Theme for the Session	Learning Organization and Cognitive Growth
Chairperson	Edward Heneveld
Lead Presenter	John Shotton

Rapporteurs	Swarna Gupta Raj Rani
<b>Presenters</b>	<b>John Shotton</b> Teaching and Learning in Indian Primary Schools—Using Local Experience  <b>A.C. Pachaury</b> Conceptual Strategies employed by the perceptually decentering and non- decentering village school children  <b>T. Padmini</b> The Influence of Culture on Cognitive Thinking  <b>Madhuri Mahapatra</b> Strategies to Reorder and Restructure the Curriculum at Primary Stage
1330 hrs - 1430 hrs	<b>Lunch</b>
1430 hrs - 1600 hrs	<b>Technical Session 2</b>
Theme for the Session	Learning Organization in Multigrade/ Multilevel Situations/Special Education
Chairperson	Prof. A.N.Maheswari
Lead Presenter	Rohit Dhankar
Rapporteurs	B.M. Gupta A.K. Srivastava
<b>Presenters</b>	<b>Peter Gam</b> Inclusive Education—A Path for the DPEP?  <b>N.S. Bhardwaj</b> Multigrade Teaching in Small Schools  <b>Kusum N. Kamat</b> Management and Organization of Learning in Multilevel/Multigrade Situations for School Effectiveness
1600 hrs - 1630 hrs	<b>Tea/Coffee</b>
1630 hrs - 1800 hrs	<b>Technical Session 3</b>
Theme for the Session	Alternative Approaches to Curriculum
Chairperson	Bert P.M.Creemers
Lead Presenter	Tom Welsh

Rapporteurs : Anjum Sibia  
Minati Panda

**Presenters**

**Andrew Burke**

Back to Basics: Research Based Lessons  
for Effective School Learning in India

**Reeta Sharma**

Functioning of Alternative Schools in  
DPEP Districts of Madhya Pradesh

**Baijayantimala Satapathy**

Capturing the Process of Indigenous Rural  
Skills for Revamping the Pedagogy at  
Primary Level

**K.K. Vasishtha**

Achievement in Science and Mathematics  
as a Function of Learning Organization of  
Competencies in Mathematics at Primary  
Stage

2000 hrs

**Dinner :** Rock Garden  
India International Centre  
40, Max Mueller Marg  
Lodi Estate, New Delhi

**16 JULY**

0930 hrs - 1030 hrs

**Visit of Prof. Murli Manohar Joshi**  
Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource  
Development  
Government of India

Welcome

Prof. A.K.Sharma  
Director, NCERT

Presentation

Introduction of the book *Reaching Out  
Further Para Teachers : An Overview* by  
Shri R.S.Pandey, Joint Secretary, DPEP

Release of the Book

*Reaching Out Further Para Teachers : An  
Overview* by the Hon'ble Minister of  
Human Resource Development

Closing Remarks

Shri P.R.Dasgupta  
Education Secretary  
Ministry of Human Resource Development

Vote of Thanks

Prof. A.N. Maheshwari  
Joint Director, NCERT

1030 hrs - 1045 hrs

1045 hrs - 1230 hrs

**Tea/Coffee**  
**Technical Session 4**

Theme for the Session:	Activity Based Classroom Transaction
Chairperson	Peter Gam
• Lead Presenter	Venita Kaul
Rapporteurs	Anjum Sibia Anita Julka
<b>Presenters</b>	<b>V.S. Varma</b> The School Mathematics Project: Towards Freedom From Fear  <b>J.S. Padhi</b> Learning Subject Specific Concepts Through Creative Activities  <b>N. Shakuntala Manay</b> Effect of Puzzle Programme in the Development of Cognitive and Creative Abilities Among Pre-School Children  <b>Neera Chopra</b> Activity Based Classroom Transaction: A Case Study
1230 hrs - 1400 hrs	<b>Technical Session 5</b>
Theme for the Session	Community Participation and School Effectiveness
Chairperson	Prof. C.Seshadri
Lead Presenter	M. S. Yadav
Rapporteurs	Anjum Sibia Minati Panda
<b>Presenters</b>	<b>Mohd. Muzammil</b> Community Participation and Resource Mobilization for Educational Development of Minorities  <b>D.K. Chakraborty</b> Learning Organization through Vervo- visual Message Transfer, Community Participation and School Effectiveness at Primary Stage  <b>K. Ganeswara Rao</b> A Study of the Relationship between Community Participation and School Effectiveness
1400 hrs - 1430 hrs	<b>Lunch</b>



1430 hrs - 1600 hrs

**Technical Session 6**

Theme for the Session

School Climate and Effectiveness

Chairperson

Ms. Mervi Karikorpi

Lead Presenter

Sharda Jain

Rapporteurs

B.M. Gupta  
A.K. Srivastava

**Presenters**

**Lynn Davies**

School Climate and Effectiveness in  
Contexts of Stringency

**P.K. Das**

Role of NGO in UEE : A Case Study of  
Agramee

**Haseen Taj**

Teacher Freezing: A Threat to School  
Effectiveness

**Elizabeth Mehta**

A Tool for the Ongoing Participatory Road  
Mapping of the Organization Development  
of Educational Institutions

1600 hrs - 1630 hrs

**Tea/Coffee**

1630 hrs - 1800 hrs

**Technical Session 7: Panel Discussion**

Theme for the Session

Learning Organization and School  
Effectiveness

Chairperson

S.C. Behar

Panelists

A.N. Maheshwari  
N.K. Jangira  
C. Seshadri

Rapporteurs

Anjum Sibia  
Minati Panda

20.00 hrs

**Dinner : Rock Garden**  
India International Centre

## 17 JULY

0930 hrs - 1100 hrs

### Technical Session 8

Theme for the Session

Community and School Management

Chairperson

Lynn Davies

Lead Presenter

Ralph W. Harbison

Rapporteurs

B.M. Gupta  
A.K. Srivastava

#### Presenters

#### Bert Creemers

Effects and Costs of Community Participation: Results of the Primary Education Quality Improvement Project

#### N.M. Rao

Combating School Dysfunctionality Through Community Mobilization : Case Study of a Rural School

#### Satender Kumar

Community Participation in Primary Education and School Effectiveness

1100 hrs - 1130 hrs

### Tea/Coffee

1130 hrs - 1330 hrs

### Technical Session 9

Theme for the Session

Management of Learning in Large-sized Classes

Chairperson

Andrew Burke

Lead Presenter

Kuldeep Kumar

Rapporteurs

Swarna Gupta  
Raj Rani

#### Presenters

#### T. Mphuti

Learning Organization and the Effectiveness of Primary Education in Lesotho: A Case Study of Roma Primary Schools

#### M. Sharada

Activity Based Teaching-Learning Strategies (ABTS) in a Large-Sized Class at Primary Stage: A Study

#### M.K. Satapathy

Teaching Environmental Studies in Large

Size Primary Classes: Evaluation of Some Practices

**Pranati Panda**

Instructional and Management Practices in Large Size Classes: Reflection on Classroom Strategies

**Lunch**

**Technical Session 10 Panel Discussion**

Community Participation and School Effectiveness

Chairperson

A.K. Sharma

Panelists

S.C. Behar

Anil Sadgopal

Susan E. Hirshberg

Rapporteurs

C.G.V. Murthy

Anita Julka

**Tea/Coffee**

**Valedictory Session**

Prof. A.K. Sharma  
Director, NCERT

Shri Anand Sarup  
Former Education Secretary, MHRD

Dr Roopa Joshi  
Director, DPEP  
Ministry of Human Resource Development

Prof. A.N. Maheshwari  
Joint Director, NCERT

N.N. Prahallada  
Swarna Gupta  
Raj Rani

1330 hrs - 1430 hrs

1430 hrs - 1530 hrs

Theme for the Session

1530 hrs - 1600 hrs

1600 hrs - 1700 hrs

Overview of the Seminar

Valedictory Address

Closing Remarks

Vote of Thanks

Rapporteurs

## Welcome Address

Prof. A.K. Sharma, *Director, NCERT*

Distinguished delegates from India and abroad, international agencies, who have made possible the visit of the scholars from other countries to be a part of this seminar, invitees, colleagues from the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the NCERT, ladies and gentlemen.

While extending my personal welcome and the welcome of the Ministry and the DPEP Bureau, to all of you, I would like to apprise you of an extraordinary situation that has taken place which necessitated the Minister's presence in the Parliament, at this very time today. You are perhaps aware that lot of discussion has been going on in the Parliament on different Ministries and yesterday, the discussion was on the Ministry of Human Resource Development. It was not expected to have been extended to today but I was informed late night yesterday that there were several questions which were raised and the Hon'ble minister was requested to respond to those questions today, positively by 12 noon. Obviously, in preparation to that kind of a meeting the entire Ministry had to be at his disposal for the briefing that had to be done to the Hon'ble Minister.

It's for the same reason that our Education Secretary Shri. P.R. Dasgupta, is also not amidst us in this inaugural session and also for the same reason the Joint Secretary of the DPEP Bureau in the Ministry Shri R.S.Pandey is also detained in the Ministry's discussion, presently going on. Nonetheless, I have also been informed that the Minister would like to meet the delegates during these three days of the Seminar, and we do look forward that it would be possible for us and him to be together.

We are extremely grateful to the International Agencies who have made the visit of the international scholars possible. Many of them have very deep association with the District Primary Education Programme in this country.

This is the fourth International Seminar in the series and as you know, the first one which is related to learning achievement in relation to school effectiveness was organized in 1995. Then we had the following seminar on Classroom Processes followed by teacher Empowerment last year. And this seminar deals with another very important concern, dealing with Learning Organization and Community Participation. I would like to particularly welcome Mr. Bert P. Creemers from the Netherlands, Mr. Andrew Burke from Ireland, Prof. Lynn Davies from United Kingdom, Mr. Peter Gam from Denmark and Mr. John Shotton from the United Kingdom. Some of them have been with us in the earlier seminars and I look to this situation, as some kind of positive input to our deliberations, because they have seen over a period of three years, what has been the nature of researches that have taken place in the primary education in this country and how their quality has shown gradually an upward trend. We look forward to the participation of the scholars and I am sure, that we will have sharing of



experiences which will be mutually beneficial to India and also to the countries which they represent. I am also very happy that many of the researchers within India have taken more and more recourse to understanding primary education which was not a situation prevailing sometime ago. There is a considerable demand from Universities for funding of researches in primary education. There are several non-governmental organizations which have played a very important role in understanding primary education. There are concerns with reference to community participation, and how it has improved in certain segments of this vast country, the quality of primary education. Various innovations that have taken place, in different parts of the country and more important the primary teachers themselves in this country have undertaken recourse to research, not a very conventional traditional research but a research which is very much deep rooted in their classroom situations with the kind of children population that they are dealing with. And this to me is one of the most important outcomes that this country has witnessed over the last few years in development of action research on the part of the practising teachers and other functionaries in the area of education.

I need not take this time in dwelling upon this because many of the sessions which are to follow will subsequently take care of the areas which are very fundamental to looking at primary education but one of the concerns which does remain very dominant in the minds of the people in this country is the target of Universalizing our Elementary Education. A target which was expected to be achieved by 1960. And we are in the 50th year of our Independence and we are still struggling to be able to make positive statement that we have achieved that particular goal which was expected to have been achieved by 1960. So many things have happened during this period of time. There is a new challenge, and there is a new concern and a new dynamism which is being expressed that by 2006, this could probably be achieved but it would require considerable introspection, once again, as to what has not helped us to achieve this goal earlier and what is the new area of confidence that comes to us that we are so sure, now that this goal would be achieved. These are some of the questions which need to re-continuously be staring us in the face and many of the researches that have happened during the last three or four years and the ones which will be discussed in this International Seminar commencing today will throw further light on how we proceed so that this goal is ultimately achieved.

There have been concerns in this country of legislating on this issue making Elementary Education a fundamental right. Though these issues are looked at from different scholastic perspectives, some advocating and some still believing, some kind of a non-legislative approach would probably be also much more significant. So we look forward to some of these questions further debated in this International Seminar of this nature and we hope that we would be able to move forward in the direction, in which this country is expected to be achieving the targets which it had set before itself.

On this occasion when the Hon'ble Minister has not been able to make it, I have been advised by him to read out his Inaugural address to this august audience, which he had probably to share himself with you when

and if he had been here personally. But I will perform this duty of reading out his address and thereafter I request my colleague Prof. Ved Prakash that considering this extraordinary situation that has arisen slight rescheduling of our sessions would probably be attempted. We have little more time and that will also be effectively utilized. I read out his address to you.

## **Inaugural Address**

**Dr Murli Manohar Joshi**

**Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development**

It gives me immense pleasure to be amidst scholars, researchers and teachers who have come from all parts of the country and abroad to discuss important issues related to an area of concern reflected in the theme of this Seminar, 'Learning Organization, Community Participation and School Effectiveness at the Primary Stage'.

I am happy to know that the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) Bureau of the Ministry of Human Resource Development have been annually organizing International Research Seminars aiming at understanding the nature of interventions for improving the quality of education leading to school effectiveness at primary stage. I have been given to understand that this Seminar is the fourth in the series, a beginning having been made in 1995 with the first International Seminar on "Learning Achievement". The second International Seminar held in 1996 focussed on "Classroom Processes". The third seminar held in 1997 dealt with issues on "Teacher Empowerment". All these seminars, drew wide ranging contributions from professionals from the field of education both from within and outside India.

I understand that the fourth Seminar on Learning Organization, Community Participation and School Effectiveness at the Primary Stage will focus on organization of learning in multigrade, multilevel, multicultural and large-sized class realities. Other issues that will be discussed in the Seminar will relate to education of children with special needs, role of the community in school management and resource mobilization for primary education. It is hoped that the seminar will not only promote further researches in primary education but will also provide probable solutions to problems that beset our primary education.

India has had a long history of cultural evolution. The system of education during the Vedic period was essentially a system of relationship between the "Guru" and the "Shishya". The starting point in the process of education, in this system, was the urge to learn on the part of the learner that impelled the aspirant to look for a 'Guru' and to be accepted into his fold. This system has defied extinction and survives even today in the way, for example, Indian classical music is still being taught by great "Gurus". Then we had the ancient institutions of learning like the famous universities of Nalanda and Takshasila. These were renowned universities of their times but all over the country there were thousands of 'Gurukulas' in which the students lived with the Acharya as members of the family. These educational institutions were considered seats of higher learning and drew scholars from as far as Asia Minor and China. By this time, the number of learners aspiring for higher education had increased and as a result education got

institutionalized, though the pastoral system of education still remained in vogue.

With the arrival of the British, the system of education underwent a major change. The Western system of schools with English as the medium of instruction emerged on the scene. These schools unlike in the past were housed in separate buildings meant exclusively for imparting instructions and the teacher was now a paid agent of the government. Ironically, the Department of Education was named as the Department of Public Instruction and the schools were supervised and monitored by an Inspectorate of schools. Textbooks were also prescribed which became the reference point for the teachers. However, the textbooks suffered on two counts. First, there was no provision of contextuality and secondly, most of the textual material had no relevance to learners' life experiences.

Soon after Independence, India as a democratic welfare state, announced 'universalization of elementary education' and 'equal opportunities for all' as the basic principles. Now it was the state that took over the responsibility of educating each and every citizen, irrespective of his/her caste or creed, social or economic status. This, obviously, proposed a sea change in the educational system of India. Since then the primary education in the country has been valued more highly than other levels of education.

In pursuance of the spirit of the Constitution, India has made remarkable strides in the expansion of primary education during the post-Independence period. Spectacular hike has been witnessed from mere 209,671 schools in 1950-51 to 590,421 schools in 1995-96. Enrolment at primary stage has escalated more than fivefolds from 19.2 millions in 1950-51 to 109.8 millions in 1995-96. Ironically, the country also has the world's largest number of out-of-school children and adult illiterates. Besides, inter-regional disparities, wide gaps between enrolment of boys and girls, rural-urban divide, pressing demands of the weaker sections of the society along with the spin-off of problems of ever growing population continue to plague the system and have been a constant cause of concern for policy planners. Realizing the gravity of the situation, the National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986 and its Programme of Action (POA), 1992 accorded an unqualified priority to Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). The policy shifts the emphasis from enrolment per se to enrolment as well as retention and achievement. The policy received a further impetus as a consequence of the declaration of the 1990 Jomtien World Conference which called upon the countries to take effective steps for achieving "Education For All" by the year 2000 AD. The modified version of the NPE-POA, 1992 stated:

"It shall be ensured that free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality is provided to all children upto 14 years of age before we enter the twenty-first century". As a sequel to the spirit of the NPE-POA, a large number of central and state sponsored programmes were launched. Very soon it was discovered that most of these programmes were deficient in delivering the goods as they were top heavy, supply based and did not provide for contextuality.



Moreover, contrary to our expectations the legacy of the west could not be shaken off even after fifty years of independence. We still follow the age old pattern of inspectorate of schools which precludes the participation of the community in the education of their own wards. The system of nationalized textbooks still prevails without having relevance to the life experiences of the learners. A centralized system of teachers training conducted on an oft-beaten track does not deliver the goods and barely contributes to the development of caring and competent teachers'. With this state of affairs people have lost their confidence and rightly so, in the state-supported system of school education. Unfortunately, this has led to the mushrooming growth of so called English medium public schools even in the countryside which claim to provide instructions in English medium right from grade one. So much so, even some of the states have started debating whether or not to introduce English as a medium of instruction in primary schools. It is not a very healthy sign because it goes contrary to the research findings which reveal that the children learn faster in their mother tongue than in any alien language.

Having realized the significance of contextuality for imparting education at the primary stage, it was felt that the planning process needs to be based on disaggregated targets. To begin with, it was decided that the district may be considered as a unit for planning and management. This 'home grown' idea is actually the basis of the emergence of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP).

The DPEP is a pioneering approach. The DPEP launched in 1994 seeks to operationalize the NPE-POA strategies of achieving UEE by transforming, toning and accelerating the primary education system. It makes a breakaway from stereo-typed confines of thinking and emphasizes micro level planning. The DPEP is an additionality that aims at accelerating the Universalization of Primary Education.

DPEP has experimented with a number of innovative approaches. Such approaches include new management practices, new efforts in locating suitable teachers and improving their performances. Much before DPEP came into existence, the concept of 'Shiksha Karmi' was tried out in Rajasthan. Local teachers who belong to the community are recruited. They charge much less than the regular teachers and have shown greater commitment and interest in teaching the children. The concept, slowly and gradually, spread to many more States, although in different forms. DPEP experiences in this regard need to be replicated on a wider scale in order to bring about reduction in expenditure and improving the quality of education.

The problems are indeed very diverse. The dropout rate of primary school children in this country varies between nearly 0% in Kerala to over 60% in Bihar. Similarly, the female literacy rate shows a great deal of diversity. There are districts where female literacy rate is less than 10%, such as District Barmer in Rajasthan and 94% in District Kottayam in Kerala. The Panchayati Raj System which should have a lot to do with the management of primary education also varies from state to state. The programmes of primary education, therefore, will have to be decentralized and formulated taking into account the local context.

The DPEP has grown out of its infancy. Significant progress has been achieved in terms of pedagogical renewal, participatory planning process, massive teacher education drive, community mobilization and building of infrastructure. I have been given to understand that for quality improvement in primary education the DPEP has supported revision of textbooks, production of supplementary teaching-learning materials besides laying foundations for the improvement of whole school effectiveness and children's learning outcomes. The programmes seem to have focussed on ensuring access to children from the weaker sections of the society and also the working children. Not only this, interesting experiments in alternative models of education have provided learning opportunities to hard-to-reach children located in remote areas.

Though primary education offers a large number of benefits besides building capacity for life long learning, it is still not embraced by all eligible young children. Ironically, for many children, primary education is the only formal education that they receive and even it does not provide them with literacy and numeracy skills, nor does it enable them to develop inquiring minds. The situation in the rural sectors is far less satisfactory than in the urban sectors. This in turn not only results in an under-educated work force in the rural sector but also increases the urban-rural divide. And, it is happening despite the common belief that young children are most responsive to learning during the early years of childhood and that cognitive and non-cognitive changes occur more rapidly among younger children. If it is so, then where lies the catch? Is it because of the rigidity of primary school curricula or because of the physical constraints in the classrooms or because of the non-availability of caring and competent teachers or because of certain home-community and management factors, or is it mainly because of the non-contextualization of teaching and learning that the children are under-educated? I wish that the researchers should make these issues as targets for their research work and try to find solutions for them.

The state of research in primary education has a long way to go. At this point of time I can visualize three reasons for this general apathy towards research in primary education. First, this area seems to have attracted the attention of very few researchers may be because it does not bestow them with a 'halo effect' as compared to other sectors of education. Secondly, there may be those who might be making sporadic attempts at doing research without converting their findings into implementable action points. Thirdly, a trickle from the small percentage of researchers investigating primary education might be those who are plagued with the compulsive obsession for research purely as an academic exercise. Because of these reasons, I, personally feel that the onus lies on the researchers assembled here to give directions for preparing a comprehensive research agenda. The agenda may be so designed wherein the ultimate focus should be on the real beneficiaries — the children. In my opinion, a programme of the dimension of DPEP has to rest heavily on research for its success as it is research that provides solutions to problems. It is also a fact that one single solution may not have a span of lifetime relevance and operation

since it may be besieged with bottlenecks and each bottleneck may require different strategies to ease the situation. I would like to urge upon all the scholars who have assembled here from different parts of the globe to debate on issues of primary education relevant in the Indian context. The outcomes of deliberations may be reported in a language easily understood by field practitioners. Any research activity can be justified if it ultimately provides pointers to teachers and administrators for a better future. To this purpose, coordination of the highest order is essential. An organization like the NCERT has, therefore, a very important role to play in initiating and promoting research on local specific issues across the country besides its dissemination. This obviously calls for broad-based research activities wherein the ultimate beneficiary, the learner, is not lost sight of. This learner may be from any segment of the society, be it from the underserved section or a child with special needs.

I welcome the international scholars who have come from different countries such as the Netherlands, U.K. Ireland, Denmark and Lesotho and who I am sure, would be sharing their rich experiences with us. I hope that foreign scholars attending this seminar will view the problems and issues during the deliberations from Indian perspective of school effectiveness in general and learning organization and community participation in particular. I also hope that this seminar will cement the academic interaction between our researchers and of those attending from other countries and provide a forum for a continuous dialogue to the mutual advantage of one and all.

I also take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all our international guests and hope that they will find their visit academically rewarding and socially satisfying. I will appreciate if this seminar discusses all issues and comes out with some concrete suggestions leading to policy perspectives which can be finally made a part of the educational planning process. I declare this seminar open. Thank you!

## Vote of Thanks

Prof. A.N. Maheshwari, *Joint Director, NCERT*

Professor A.K.Sharma, Director, NCERT, Prof. Ved Prakash, participants of the Seminar, honoured guests and members of the press.

I would like to first place my thanks to persons not present with us in the inaugural session but who have been a source of encouragement to us and who are very keen to attend the inaugural session and be with us. In this category I would first like to record my thanks, thanks on behalf of all the participants of the seminar to Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development, Prof. Murli Manohar Joshi. This morning he spoke to Prof. Sharma and expressed his inability which he has shared with us in his opening remarks. We are thankful to him for his very thought provoking ideas which we would have loved to hear in his own voice. We are very happy that Prof. Sharma could read out the address of Hon'ble Minister.

I would like to thank our honoured Education Secretary who has been a source of strength to NCERT and to all its programmes in general and to the activities of District Primary Education Programme which are with NCERT and organization of this seminar is one of the activities which is with NCERT for the District Primary Education Programme. I thank Shri R.S.Pandey, Joint Secretary, DPEP Bureau who again will not be able to come on account of reasons which the Director had explained to us in his opening remarks. He has been a source of strength to all of us for past four years and we have been constantly working together with him on various strategies of planning the activities and making preparations for the seminar. I would, indeed, be very happy, had it been possible for Shri Pandey to be physically present amongst us this morning.

I know that I should not take more time because we have a presentation schedule immediately after I close my welcome and my thanks remarks. In particular, I would take a minute to thank my friends John Shotton, Bert Creemers, Andrew Burke who have given us tremendous encouragement by returning to this seminar and their words of encouragement that they have been sharing with us off and on. I thank all the honoured guests who have graced the inaugural function and who have supported the NCERT and this particular activity.

I will now close my remarks because here I cannot cut into the time which is to be taken up by the lead presentation which has been advanced from the session to commence at 11.30 a.m., to now commence at 10.30 a.m. At this particular time, may be, I'll get another opportunity towards the end of this seminar to thank many others who have helped us in organizing this seminar. Thank you!



## Welcome Address

Prof. A.K. Sharma, *Director, NCERT*

It is indeed my privilege to welcome in our midst today, Hon'ble Minister for Human Resource Development, Prof. Murli Manohar Joshi. His inability to be with us yesterday in the inaugural session of the seminar was indeed beyond his control. He had to iron out a tough debate of the Ministry which could not have been done by any person other than the Minister himself. Sir, we gratefully value your presence amidst us for however brief the time you have been able to spare. The seminar would not have been complete without your blessings. As an eminent physicist and an erudite scholar of both modern and ancient perspectives in development of the history of Science and Technology, the teacher in you is always brought to bear upon a fresh look at the country's educational problems and has been an evidence of a distinct impact of your analytical mind.

Sir, this seminar which commenced yesterday with your inaugural speech which, as advised by you was read out by me, had set the tone for the deliberations of this seminar which deals with learning organization in the classrooms and community participation, in as much as these two affect school effectiveness programme at the primary stage. This is the fourth seminar in the series, the earlier three seminars having dealt with the themes of learning achievement, classroom processes and teacher empowerment.

We are very happy that in this seminar we have the benefit of participation from our international scholars representing countries like Ireland, United Kingdom, Lesotho, Denmark, and the Netherlands. It has been a very rewarding experience to share their concerns of primary education in their respective countries and has brought some kind of a fresh interaction amongst the scholars both from abroad and from India.

Considering the constraints of time, Sir, the whole concerns with these annual features of holding international seminars is to go on giving a fresh look at our concerns in primary education. Fifty years have passed. We are still grappling with some of our concerns to universalize primary education. Something needs to be probably looked further deep into. Why has success eluded us? Have we made ourselves more dependent on some of the models which, Sir, have not been indigenously suited? The problems of contextualization both for the child and the classroom and the teacher, the problem of management, supervision through the models that we have presently been utilizing, the whole concern of an ever increasing demand for imparting primary education through a tongue which is not the mother tongue, some of the concerns of this kind are probably at the heart of the problems which we have still not been able to overcome. Perhaps, some indigenous thinking, rethinking is called for and we look forward to your words which we have seen quite a bit of it reported today in the newspapers

which may probably help us to move forward to realize the dreams which have not been fulfilled so far.

I should also take this opportunity of welcoming in our midst Shri P.R.Dasgupta, our Education Secretary and Shri R.S.Pandey Joint Secretary of the District Primary Education Bureau who for essentially the same reason could not also be with us yesterday. Before requesting the Minister to give his observation to us, I have a small task which has been given to me. Mr. R.S.Pandey will give a few words about the book which is to be released by the Minister and after he does that we request the Hon'ble Minister to speak to us.

## **Address to the Participants of the International Seminar**

**Dr Murli Manohar Joshi**

**Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development**

Shri P.R. Dasgupta, Secretary Education, Prof. Sharma, Mr. Pandey, Prof. Maheshwari, Prof. Ved Prakash, participants in this seminar who are assembled here, coming from various countries and other distinguished invitees.

I am extremely sorry that I couldn't come yesterday because of some circumstances beyond my control, but I thought that I must have an opportunity to meet such a distinguished gathering, who are involved in tackling one of the major problems confronting not only India but various other countries as well.

India was not as illiterate as it is supposed to be today. It is the legacy of the colonial rule that our entire education system was destroyed bit by bit and we have been handed over a system which was not suited for our country. India is a vast country and any centralized scheme of education will never succeed in this country, particularly when you have to attend to more than half a million habitations and equal number of other small tiny regions or hutments.

India can also not afford a high cost system of spreading education. A model which is suitable for one country may not be suitable for another country. I have been always interacting with my friends in the West that you have certain advantages which we do not have today. Please do not try to see that whatever Indian efforts are, these efforts are not in conformity with what you are doing and what you want to be done in other parts of the world but try to analyze them and appreciate them in a backdrop of the country which is not in a position to augment so many resources so as to create an educational network which compares with what has been done in those countries. And I have always been advising my Indian friends that please do not try to copy those models because if you copy them you will never succeed in creating that network.

The essential thing and the most important thing or the core of the problem is how do we impart education to our children? I believe that in Indian circumstances it has to be a low cost system. I have been advocating as a student of science even in the field of technology a low cost, a low energy system. If you just look to the nature around you you will find that nature believes in low cost energy techniques. Human system is perhaps the most wonderful machine which nature has created. I am not talking about the spiritual and intellectual aspects at the moment but purely looking from the mechanical point of view. Human system is one which consumes very low levels of energy, not more than 3000 calories per day, insignificant as compared to what we are doing while you are using your microphones.

Human system can perform miracles though it is a low energy system. Look to the other improvisations of nature. Nature gives us wonderful fruits. It produces food from solar energy. What we observe, what we obtain either in terms of vegetables, cereals or even animal food is all the gift of solar energy. So, in general, nature believes or nature works in terms of low energy techniques. That means that low energy low cost is the order of nature. So whenever you go for very high cost things and high energy things you are in a way departing from nature's method of doing things. So even to my affluent countries I have a little piece of advice, if they care to take an advice from a country like ours that please do not try to impose high cost techniques on other countries including yourselves, go for low cost techniques. There is enough in this world which can provide the needs of everybody but there is too little in this world which will satisfy the greed of everybody. Therefore, looking to the resources which nature has given us we must try to use these resources very carefully whether it is in terms of pedagogy, technology or in terms of any economic growth pattern. Therefore, I believe that India can universalise education provided it follows the model of its own, provided it adopts low cost technologies.

Long before the advent of Britishers, India was almost fully literate. Mahatma Gandhi had a debate with some of the Britishers about the level of illiteracy inflicted upon India by the colonial rulers. Every village school had almost a fully functioning system, and was a fully functioning operational institution in itself. It had imparted not only elementary education but it produced expertise. I need not go into those details but we had an indigenous system which made India one of the most literate countries in the world. Therefore, I would advise all those who are keenly interested in universalising education to have a look at their decentralized system where the local-self bodies, the Panchayati Raj system was taking full care of elementary education and even of expertise producing techniques in certain areas. They could produce bankers, they could produce scholars to a limited extent, meteorologists, medical men, not paramedical men but fully developed medical men. So if we could do it just 300 years ago why can't we do it again? That is the basic thing. I advise all my friends who are working in this field to take a fresh look on the problem with a fresh mind and I say and I repeat please do not consider that what is good for one country is always good for the other. Every country has its own ethos and its own tradition and its own methods of working. We must learn from the experiences of other countries but we must not follow blindly. Such seminars provide us an opportunity to share the experiences and let us share them with a sense of equality, with a sense of partnership not only universalizing education in this country but in other parts of the world where this is needed as one of the most important inputs for human development. I believe that this seminar would throw out certain models and would provide solutions to certain problems which can be then applied in a country-specific manner. Thank you very much!



## Closing Observations

Shri P.R. Dasgupta, *Education Secretary*

Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development Dr Murli Manohar Joshi, my colleagues Dr A.K. Sharma, Shri R.S. Pandey, Prof. Ved Prakash, Dr Maheswari, distinguished members who have come to join this International Seminar, invitees, ladies and gentlemen.

I don't think it is necessary for me to make any detailed or profound observation after what our Minister has stated. It is my pleasant duty to express out grateful thanks to our Minister, to all of you, for joining in together and making this experience a worthwhile experience.

I think as Hon'ble Minister stated basically, what we are looking for, is something which could be called an 'operation restoration', that is to restore to the community what it had always performed in this country; what was perhaps, later on derailed and usurped by the state; to restore back to the community what it has always been doing. It is not divesting the state's responsibility, but it is playing the state's responsibility to make a community, self-supporting and an organic community which does not remain only a passive recipient of grace from a overlord but which is an active participant in the process in which education becomes a living experience. I think that's what has been our tradition, that's what I think should be our effort because it is now I think fairly clear that what we have to tackle with, is not something which can be tackled by any Government, however, efficient it might be.

I am, indeed, most grateful that we have our Hon'ble Minister here, today and for setting the tone with his inaugural address which was read out yesterday and what he mentioned today. I would be failing in my duty if I don't express our thanks to Shri Yogendra of the Bodh Shiksha Samiti and his team including Dr Surendra Khushwaha, Ms Reshma Agarwal, Mr Prakash Naik and Mr Rajkishore Dungdung for undertaking the study which has led to the publication of this book which was released by our Hon'ble Minister. I thank you once again.

## Overview of the Seminar

Prof. A.K. Sharma, *Director, NCERT*

Shri Anand Sarup, Prof. Maheshwari, Prof. Ved Prakash, Dr Roopa Joshi, distinguished friends who have participated in the deliberations of this three-day seminar.

It is not a very easy task to capture the real outcomes of each and every paper which has been presented here and particularly when a person who has to give an overview was not available in this hall for all times. Nonetheless, there are general observations which one has captured from each of the presentations and I will essentially be doing the task of presenting to the Chief Guest, an overview of what has happened in these three days.

Sir, the seminar started on the fifteenth, as you are aware, and we had a speech of our Hon'ble Minister, which contains some of the ideas which he wanted to be shared with the group here. He was not in a position to personally be present here in the Inaugural Session so his inaugural address had to be read out but we were fortunate that next day he was able to come and he shared some of his concerns the next day with this group. He had essentially mentioned two or three things which in fact have been the guiding spirit for the deliberations. More or less, he talked about the contextualization, particularly contextualization in respect of primary education. And in this context he has elaborated that we have perhaps, experimented with some models which for 50 years have not provided us the desired results of even universalizing primary education and may not be out of place to reconsider whether there were indigenous models which we might have left behind and not given adequate attention and he felt that any transplantation of ideas from anywhere else will not necessarily grow in a soil which is not very conducive to their growth. These were his general basic observations which highlighted his remarks.

So far as this seminar is concerned, Sir, this is the fourth seminar in the series. Three seminars have preceded it beginning in 1995 and every year it has been attempted to see that a wider catchment area is provided for people who were thinking about primary education who were conducting certain grassroot related studies and investigations and to that direction we had been holding regional seminars. Four regional seminars have been organized in different parts of the country to invite a larger number of people to participate in their concern for primary education and the studies that they had undertaken and whatever was found to be of a value which could be brought to this International Seminar has been made available to you, Sir, in the folder which we have provided to you.

There are about 30 research papers which have been included there. The whole point is that when we are looking at such an exercise, what is it that we are expecting out of it? What is the message that we want to carry? Hold another seminar next year and continue holding it year after year, or is there something else behind it? This exercise is not just meant for

preparing people to attend another seminar next year. The concern was that if we could succeed in creating a climate for people undertaking the research of the ground reality of our educational system and if they could increase this kind of an input year after year after year, this will probably be the best outcome of these seminars. I make this statement because we are conscious of the fact that many of the papers which have even been presented after sifting out from regional seminars may lack the rigours of a research design, research methodology and even the findings may not be very-very pin-pointed to be taken to the grassroot situations. But then, what has happened is, that people have tried to take up little situations in their own environment and have attempted to make a study of it. Perhaps, they have succeeded in solving their little problems but it does not essentially mean that what they have done and presented in the researches here have a potential for up-scaling in the entire country. That was never the intention, that can never be the intention either, which means that with time it should become possible that the quality of these inputs through research is continuously improved.

I will not be hiding anything if I were to share with you, Sir, and this audience, that there has not been a very substantive research in primary education in this country. And the five surveys of educational research which are available with the NCERT as conducted are a pointer to that effect. And also most of the researches which are available to us are related to areas which can lead to an M.Phil degree or a Ph.D. degree, but are not essentially areas which call for a deeper, more sincere investigation to solve some problem. And, therefore, in this particular context I feel that this International Seminar which has indicated a certain upward trend in the quality of presentations, and in the quality of discussion that has taken place in this room is certainly something which we can feel reasonably happy about.

We have participation in this Seminar from our colleagues from within the country and we also had the participation from some international scholars. We have five international researchers who have presented, shared their concerns with us and I must also share with you at this time that their participation is not essentially what we are looking for, to something which they have done which will be automatically absorbed in our system. But sometimes we do find that in the inputs which other countries have tried in their primary education, there may be some idea which have some relevance and after suitable adaptation could be attempted in a country like ours, found out its significance if it worked, that would probably be only the outcome of this international sharing of experiences in the area of primary education.

We had in the Seminar, research papers, we had also papers which we cannot strictly call research but as some perception based papers. People have experiences and have tried to jot them down, some case studies have been reported here. And in addition to that there have been two panel discussions that have taken place which as I find from interaction with friends during coffee breaks that the panel discussions have certainly been quite provocative and have enabled people to bring out whatever they felt

generally from within. Not all the time that the views which are expressed or acceptable to one and all but then it is appropriate to listen to differing views, to be able to understand what is being said which has implications for something else. There has been a lot of stimulations from that point of view. There has not only been questions posed by the participants there have been lot of valuable observations which have enriched the deliberations of this particular seminar.

We would very much have wished Sir, as you mentioned it during your tea break that we ascertain from people, here, in this group, what exactly would they like us to do next year? Would they like us to decide a theme at our end, and then circulate it and invite papers? Or we could have also held some session with you to really find out what exactly the modality of the seminar, the theme of the next seminar, the manner of its execution, etc. Would you have an idea, or what is the agenda which you thought, would be more appropriate for a continuity of the exercise which has already been attempted through these four seminars? Unfortunately, we did not have a strictly defined session for this purpose but we have interacted during whatever time the two dinners that we had, and some lunch with these breaks, so that some ideas are generated but your suggestion is very valuable, we will try to see, how best we can take into account.

But the second aspect, Sir, of the seminar which I want to share with you that this seminar has not provided any final solutions to any problems. It would be too presumptuous to say that the research studies have provided solutions to problems. But they have certainly provided some solutions to a very contextual area which that particular study has taken into account. And in that context they have attempted and they probably have shown some success in their particular area. So the changed focus is that one of the things which I feel happy personally is that there is a change of focus, and that focus is that instead of scholastic researches which have been the order of the day, in the University and other institutions, there is a concern now, that we should research on issues which call for some solutions to our problems in education, particularly primary education. And if nothing else the survey of the titles of the paper does indicate that there is a concern towards that direction and it is increasing gradually.

It is not very easy to expect microlevel successes to have macrolevel applications throughout the length and breadth of the country because of the variety of reasons and upscaling is not always possible. People who succeed in a particular context have a certain sense of motivation to do that job, and if the same motivation is not replicable elsewhere, and the people elsewhere think differently, it is not always possible to achieve the same results even if we try to replicate the entire parameters of a particular programme. This is where we find that what comes out as lesson out of the seminar is that if local-specific context has to be investigated, then, one should look forward to having a large number of people with their sense of motivation to that area which will multiply in a country like this. And no imposition from higher level on uniform basis should be attempted in a country of this size in nature. This is where I think the lesson and the



whole issue the discussion of decentralization in the context in which it is understood by most of us has laid some foundation for our future work.

The seminar, this particular seminar, talked about two things primarily, Learning Organization and the second was Community Participation, both of them in relation to School Effectiveness. Now, if we go through or listen to the papers what we find is there has been a concern of understanding the whole meaning of learning organization. People have looked at this idea variously. Some of the presenters here have looked at learning organization in terms of an organizational design of a learning system. They have been talking about the formal school as some kind of a social institution where something will happen for the society children. There have been also some references that learning organization is also that where parents are involved directly with children and that there are social environment which are contributing to learning. That is another learning organization which has been attempted here. Which one is to be accepted as a model? That which is defined internationally, or nationally? I'm not going into that, but this is how people who have presented here, have looked at this problem.

We have also taken into account learning organization of some areas of alternative schooling. As an organization for learning and non-formal education, alternative schooling has been understood in a variety of ways which of course is a subject of further debate which was not very much dealt with here. In most of the situations it looks like that an alternative schooling nomenclature has been a replacement for the non-formal education which we have been talking about so far. This is my understanding of what I have understood of the presentations in the paper.

The second aspect of learning organization which has been discussed here is in terms of the learning processes that have a bearing on retention of children in the school in the learning centre and have a bearing on development of certain quality inputs into the educational system. Issues have been raised that our concern in primary education, where learning is essentially based and assessed on year to year performance of children, probably, is a model which needs to be further looked into. Whether we could divide the entire primary stage into certain levels or a continuum of five years into two levels one and two to be taken along with the preschool years and three, four and five and another level which could define the primary education. There have been presentation which talked about multilevel in the primary stage packaging and multilevel packaging has lot of implications which have been discussed. It respects the individual's pace of learning, the innate abilities inherent in an individual and it has tried to discuss the issues related to pedagogy and the teachers training so far as multilevel handling of classroom situation is concerned. Right now, the entire teaching-learning process addressed to an average ability student in the classroom the exceptional ones and the ones who do not have or were a little down below, their specific interests are not being attended to and that perhaps, was also cited as one of the reasons why children might come out of the primary school even after interventions are there.

Our context of multigrade teaching was another concern here. We have several grades in a primary school and one teacher. This has not been a new situation. As a matter of fact and most of us know that when we were primary school children it was one teacher essentially who was handling, whatever we had to learn in primary school and therefore the multigrade context which has been attempted in this country has very innovative ideas in several parts. We have had some case studies, we had some presentations and this has been in the western context in the other models that we had British Columbia's school experience, where one finds that it is a natural acceptance of a multigrade teaching. And in this context of ours my understanding is that we have a compulsion because we don't have the number of teachers for each class or whatever area has to be taught and therefore, the differences of interpreting multigrade setting in other context and the Indian context have been attempted and presented here.

There has been a concern here, again a classroom related situation of size of the classroom and its influence on teaching-learning environment that is to begin. And it has been suggested that the seating arrangement in a classroom may affect quite a bit of learning instead of children seeing each other's bags if they see each other's faces, probably, the learning environment of interaction is different. When we talked about the contextual learning then, we are in conflict with several situations. Some of the papers were presented that in mathematics teaching or language teaching, when we are talking about Minimum Levels of Learning and where we have defined notionally certain skills to be developed, I think we are talking of the contextual curriculum for the environment of that child in which he or she is living. Then may be the minimum levels of learning have to be essentially related to identification of the content area which is in the environment of the child. It may have to be in connection with what needs the child can identify in the environment whether he can distinguish between one kind of pebble and the other kind of pebble and not essentially the competence which we have been talking about and in the context of this contextuality that we are talking about, the whole concept of Minimum Levels of Learning may have to be probably also debated much further.

Then, we had problems of language development and language in conceptual development in children. There has been some reference to this and the cultural factors which are connected with this learning. If we employ the cultural experiences of the children and use them in designing a curriculum for their learning it has its own implications. There were one or two presentations which dealt with that idea but there was also an oblique reference in the discussions that came in about the language that we are trying to use for our instructional medium and the whole concept of trying to enforce another language on a child which is not the mother tongue and then look forward to essential good learnings coming out of it is a subject of debate. Many people are not prepared to accept the view points and the question remains, I do not know whether legislations are required or something else is required.

When it comes to Community Participation, Sir, the last point which I wanted to bring to you just preceding this session there was a panel

discussion on this particular subject but the whole concept of what is decentralization, how it has to be looked into, whether the 73rd, 74th Constitution Amendment is being interpreted in a manner, lots of questions have been raised over here. We have also to, I think, debate the question much further, when we are talking of contextualization and local-specific curriculum. My personal view is that we must understand upto what stage are we going to extend this idea upto 11 years, 12 years of age of the child or beyond that? What does contextuality mean? You are ultimately leaving a child to what direction? I can understand the first 12 or 13 years of the child when growth and development takes place in a very different perspective altogether. This child has to know something of mathematics, something of science in a manner in which he comes out of a certain level of education and is comparable with his counterparts elsewhere. I can't design a local specific curriculum in teaching of many of these areas beyond Class VII or beyond Class VIII. Knowledge becomes a dominant influence and therefore this question of a national curriculum and a national vision for education that has been raised here in this seminar. What should be a national curriculum or should it be of a national vision upto primary stage? I think I will not go further into this part but questions are not still debated, we have not found the answers to this.

Teacher is a pivot of the entire system. Community has to expect something of somebody whether it creates the teacher also. If the community is able to create that kind of a teacher which it wants to serve the children of the community wherewithals and where is the method of creation of that kind of a teacher by the community itself? And if this teacher is the ultimate factor and we are seeing from the 73rd, 74th Constitutional Amendment that the teacher is not accepting the authority of the local bodies to perform his or her functions. It doesn't want it. I am not saying they should be made to accept it or not accept it but the issue still remains that this particular teacher who is not prepared, is an outsider, would certainly call for a transformation of the entire system of teacher recruitment, identification of that particular person who will be in that system itself, will not be paid person of somebody else, because the disciplinary authority and the appointing authority or elsewhere the teacher looks to them and not the local masters who want something happening out of that particular teacher. There has to be a metamorphoses of the entire process of generating those individuals who have to run the system, even at the behest of the community, as a part of the community and these questions do not seem to have been very effectively answered and unless we have a good debate on some issues we will not be really understanding why we are really doing what we are doing.

Decentralization is one aspect of curriculum planning. Curriculum will be designed by the community, upto what level, upto what stage, upto 11 years primary stage? Fine, I can understand my local environment which is available to me as an unprinted curriculum which must be exploited, but upto what stage? What is the competency of all the people within the community to be able to look at the total educational process for all the 10 years of school education? These questions, they have not been able to

deliberate on them. May be, something else will come out of these deliberations in this exercise.

I end, Sir, here. This is a broad overview which I have captured and might have misrepresented some of the things because there was no written thing available to me. This is what I have been hearing, interacting, listening and it is quite possible that some of the things might not be reflecting the true deliberations in some areas but by and large, I can assure this is the kind of the discussion that has taken place in this particular seminar. Thank you very much!



## Valedictory Address

Shri Anand Sarup, *Former Education Secretary*

Dr Sharma, Dr Ved Prakash, Prof. Maheshwari, ladies and gentlemen.

Whenever I have to go and participate in functions of this kind I do so with considerable hesitation. One of the reasons for that is, that people tend to hold me responsible for the Policy of Education which was adopted by this country in 1986. In spite of the fact that in policy itself it was clearly stated that this policy will be reviewed from time to time and at least after ten years, there will be a thorough review in order to determine as to what has been decided appropriately and what ought to be thrown into the dustbin. It is very understandable that when the world is undergoing a change and we are ourselves learning from day to day experience, whatever framework we create should be found short of our needs. Therefore, an intelligent set of people involved with the processes for which a policy was formulated should decide as to what is still valid and what is invalid.

It seems very strange to me that almost nowhere is there a frontal, a frank and if I may say so, an unfettered discussion on the validity of the various ideas put into the policy of 1986. So, being associated with something which I myself feel is out of sync with the times, I feel uncomfortable. And what is more, I feel terribly upset about the fact that others are not coming around to saying that.

I remember, I wrote a document for the Planning Commission some twenty-five years back. Last year, it was issued again and they invited me to participate in that function and all I could do was to say that I bow my head in shame, that after twenty-five years of experience you have not found it possible. You have not been forced to, you have not thought about, discarding this document which by the very nature of, by the very flux of time, must have become out of tune with the times.

Now, I have gone through some of the documents which were made available to me, some of the research reports which were made available to me, and from what Dr Sharma has said, it is quite clear that what was in the papers was greatly enriched by interaction during discussions. Many points that he mentioned are not in the papers but they came out here because people were interacting and they forgot what they had written, perhaps, or there were challenges during the discussion which led to the generation of new ideas. He mentioned that a possible approach could be a discussion on next years' programme. Actually I was talking about this to him, during the tea break, because it seems to me that this is perhaps, the only all India discussion in which DPEP is analyzed, considered. It seems very natural to me that it is this group which should decide as to what should be the priorities for innovation and experimentation in the next year which then will throw up studies to be discussed in the next year's seminar. This is, it seems a participative way of determining research

priorities and well, it seems to me that it might possibly find an echo in the documentation of this seminar.

I had actually noted down a lot of things which I would say to you. But I am tempted to tell you the story of the Pathan and the Baniya. There was this six foot two Pathan and there was also this six foot three Baniya, and the six foot three Baniya held the Pathan down on the ground and he was sitting on the Pathan's chest. But he was crying and the Pathan was also crying. So somebody said, "What is this, why are you crying? You got this man down on the floor and you are sitting on his chest and crying". He said "I am afraid, when he gets up what will he do to me". So I am like that Baniya, I say to myself, we have this project, some you know, the World Bank and others, have sent us experts, given us the goodies, support innovations and experimentation and seminars of this kind. I am at the moment sitting like the Baniya on the chest of the Pathan, but one of these days I am quite sure, as that Baniya was sure, the Pathan will get up, then what will happen? The World Bank project will come to an end, then what will happen?

Let me let you into a secret. When the National Policy on Education was being discussed in CABE, I was sitting like a babu in the second row on the dais just behind Rajiv Gandhi, who at that time swore by me. I was his blue-eyed boy. I was the fellow who had got it as he wanted to produce the policy on the dot according to him. But I was making some diagrams, and he just turned around saw me drawing the diagrams and said "What are you doing"? I said, "I am making diagrams". So he said "What is this about"? I said, "I am drawing a diagram to describe the process from adoption of policy to return to normalcy, because after all the policy has been formulated." On the day when the new policy was presented to the Parliament, I sneaked into the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration and delivered a paper which is available describing with diagrams and with text, how it was likely or what would be, now that the policy was going to be adopted. There are two ways in which it can go. It can go towards the adoption of policy and to further improvement of the programme on the ground or it could go back to business as usual. Think about it, Dr Sharma who is a better judge than you, have we not gone back to business as usual? If somebody had been sent away to solitary confinement on the day before the adoption of the new policy, and had suddenly been brought back, and made to walk through the villages of India, particularly of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, would he be able to say that he was looking at institutions which were significantly different from what these were before he was incarcerated?

Now, therefore, frankly, I live in great fear, here is this DPEP, I read its report, it's made a great difference to enrolment, particularly the enrolment of girls and also of the Scheduled Castes, though not of the Scheduled Tribes as much, but it is looking for ways of retention, the problem of retention continues to plague this programme also and it is very rightly stated in the executive summary of the report that until a solution is found for this particular problem of repetition and of retention we will really not have crossed the Rubicon.

Now, therefore, I keep thinking about, why is it that this condition continues to persist, this situation with regard to primary education continues to be as bad? I am not talking about DPEP, I am talking of the country as a whole and I say why is it the things continue to be as they are and one of the things that strikes me in the eyes is that educational backwardness and economic backwardness go together. That's why during the tea break I was mentioning that the real mine fields for testing new ideas and determining whether they work or they don't work field research is required.

I remember years ago in a seminar in Japan, I had put forward the case of Bangladesh as the test case for the strategies for national development. Everybody was talking about as if they knew what to do, so I put forward all the data about Bangladesh and this was a seven day seminar, so there was plenty of time for discussion. So I circulated the data and I said unless you can give me a solution for Bangladesh I will not accept that you know what to do about the problem of backwardness. Similarly I would say, unless you can find out and establish that you know what to do with Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, but Bihar and Uttar Pradesh I would put on a different category, you don't know really what needs to be done.

Now, as we know there is a symbiotic relationship between economic and educational backwardness and we also know that economically backward areas with low levels of literacy tend to have an unfavourable environment from the point of view of almost all aspects of the backwardness. For instance they have problems in respect of things like casting out superstition, escaping from the stranglehold of parochialism and religious intolerance, empowerment of women, lowering of birth rate, low levels of wage which is an income, low productivity, migration of unskilled labour on a large scale to urban areas under distressing conditions and political marginalization. I ask myself, how can a country embroiled with all the problems of globalization, challenges to cultural identity, changes in economic structures and in the throes of a technological transformation, cope with this problem with vast regions populated by illiterate masses? For the new but unlettered millions of entrants to the job market, what jobs do we expect, would materialize in the coming years? Particularly, when people are going to move from the rural to the urban areas. Educationally and economically backward areas are often unable to foster democratic values and imbue individual citizens with a sense of confidence and self-reliance. It is widely recognized that in spite of highly democratic constitutional structure, Indian polity is flawed by the absence of an egalitarian and enlightened culture. Feudal values still predominate society. Equality before law is a mere slogan because of steep disparities of economic power. The bulk of Indian population used to looking abjectly at feudal protectors and the government, cannot conceive of the pluralism which is an essential prerequisite of democracy. It is a fact, that as long as such a high level of illiteracy persists, things will by and large remain as they are, notwithstanding the unprecedented increase in the power of communication media.

In India even after 50 years of Independence, it is fashionable to blame the British for most of its problems. I don't know whether somebody blamed the British doing the discussions here? But the British have been dead and gone for 50 years. To take shelter behind their misdeeds in the context of primary education is an unacceptable alibi for our shameful neglect of the most important problem, so succinctly set forth in the Constitution itself. In this context it seems necessary to sound a warning that the present level of illiteracy is not something merely in the nature of a cumulative carry over from the past which can be wiped out by the launching of dynamic and extensive adult literacy campaigns incorporating the objective of total literacy.

I have on my table a report of the Comptroller and the Auditor General of India which says that the total literacy programme has been a big fraud and provides a lot of data in order to support this content. Actually because of non-enrolment and high drop-out rate of children even at present, the conditions which would keep nearly one-third to half of our generations, illiterate, continue to exist. We all know, that poverty is highly debilitating, in every sense of the word and deprivation in comparative terms. It is alright if I am poor, and Dr Sharma is also poor, and Dr Ved Prakash is also poor, we are all poor here. It doesn't matter, being poor is tolerable. What become intolerable is that I am sitting here in rags and Dr Sharma comes wearing a jacket woven out of gold and silver cloth, then I say, this is an unfair world and I will not stand for it. So in comparative terms you know this deprivation. It is the problem of deprivation which adds frustration, bitterness and alienation to the problem of poverty. However, deprivation of equitable access even to functionally viable primary education takes away from the people concerned even the capacity for vertical or horizontal mobility and in the process robs them even of the hope of bettering their lot later in life. How can anyone expect that sooner or later this alienation and hopelessness will not erupt into individual and organized state of belligerence and violence, notwithstanding, the cosmetic grassroots democracy of panchayats?

I read a lot about Panchayats. You know there is, when we talk about public participation, well, even in some places panchayat may be working fine, but I know about U.P., I know about Bihar, I know about some other states, and frankly the whole thing, the powers that the panchayats have, and the way panchayats are functioning, many of my friends say, it is all cosmetic and these are the people who are living there. You see researchers who go there and come back, have a different vision of what goes on the ground. But those who live there, from day-to-day, they are the ones who really know where the shoe pinches. Already the Ministry of Home Affairs according to the *Times of India*, July 14, 1998 has classified 210 of all the five thirty-five districts of India as disturbed areas affected by insurgency, ethnic strife, caste clashes, extremist activities etc. Would one be seriously in error if one presumed that this state of affairs would to a considerable degree be attributable to either a high level of illiteracy and/or the percolation of an education of the world of independent thinking and a sense of socio responsibility? A lot of people are aware of the realities on the ground, as



well as the inherent dangers lurking behind these and we also know all the ways of improving the situation. See, as I was going through the documents that are research documents which have been circulated, it occurred to me that we are, pardon me Dr Sharma, many of us are trying to reinvent the wheel. I would say the studies are extremely good in a sense that there is a certain kind of sincerity. You know the researchers have a sincerity which comes through their work, but even then, when you think about their hypothesis which are sought to be tested, you really ask yourself don't you already know from considerable experience, that this is true? Like for example, if somebody says, community participation, results in better performance of the school.

Now I remember, some forty years back I was working in Ambala and a very brilliant person was looking after the school system, and somehow, you might have heard about Mr Randhawa, and there was this man who insisted that he would not move to any school unless half the adult population of the village was present there in order to discuss the problems of the school and in two years he was able to change the atmosphere of the school, the upkeep of the school, the schools were glistening because people had been coming there, and looking at what was going on. So, I think a lot of people know the solutions also, but most of the people in informal discussions and I am not naming any names, because some of them are present here but many of them in informal discussions admit that the real problem is neither an organizational restructuring nor of pedagogic strategies or even of curricular design and paucity of resources. Even the problem of teacher motivation and performance can be solved. The real problem lies in socio-political ecology, in a socio-political environment in which everybody is concerned only with money and power.

Now, how does one get policy makers, opinion leaders as well as those responsible for policy implementation, to think carefully about primary education for the masses in schools in which their own children and grandchildren do not participate because they go to English medium schools? How do you ensure that these people who have no stake in the schools for the masses will allocate adequate resources, create effective mechanism for educational planning and monitoring and timely corrective action in the functioning of primary schools for children who are with us. The key question to my mind is how a sense of urgency vis-a-vis the problems of primary education may be generated amongst the prime movers, who besides, being the product of a socially authoritarian culture themselves, have a vested interest in perpetuating educational and economic inequalities, in order to retain their power over the common people.

I know very well, that what I have said as a valedictory address really would not qualify as an address of this category. But it seems to me that the problem is political and I am quite sure even though, mind you, I was very impressed with this gentleman, Mr Burke, who in his paper says that everything that comes from outside is not necessarily good and everything that we have been doing, everything that we have learnt from experience and evolved with time and you know part of our tradition is not bad. Now, many of these things are known so I thought that departing from the

convention of gentlemanly observations at the valedictory address I would share with you my worry, number one, about what will happen when these foreigners leave, number two, because you see, in this country, I can sit down and list the number of institutions which or number of innovations that I have introduced over a lifetime and I am afraid of going to those places again. I am very afraid of going to Uttar Pradesh because the place is littered with the ruins of what at one time my colleagues and I had built with great enthusiasm and hope because everything seems to turn into mud after a few years. It is a genuine fear but whatever fears I have, the best I could do was to share them with you. Thank you very much for inviting me. Thank you!

## Closing Remarks

Dr Roopa Joshi, *Director, DPEP*

Respected Shri Anand Sarup Ji, Dr A.K.Sharma Ji, Prof. A.N.Maheshwari, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I must confess, I feel like the mosquito who once went to a beach resort and said "Now where do I start"? So much has been said by very eminent and distinguished people that there is really very little left for me to say. However, since our Joint Secretary, Mr Pandey, is busy with the Parliament and I have been asked to say a few words on his behalf, I think I'll get on to the points straight away.

The first is that, I think, the Seminar has been extremely instructive for us in the bureau because it has provided us with a very wide perspective, on issues that impinged directly on some of our interventions, particularly those of learning organization, community participation and school effectiveness. This is, indeed, a complex triangle which we ourselves in the Bureau try to understand not just through our implementing of our guidelines but also through the feedback that we get from various research issues that are raised and the gamut and the polarity of use that come up in for a like these.

As you are well aware, community participation does form an integral core of the DPEP Programme and the involvement of the community has been recognized as a critical and key element of programme implementation.

Much though this topic has been discussed as you rightly mentioned, Sir, over the past 40 years, we have found that in the course of our implementation the bottlenecks essentially arise through multifarious factors largely associated with the social and political dynamics of localized communities but also because the process of empowerment, given the legal structure, and access to resources has also been fairly limited to community so far. So we tried through our interventions particularly with the school improvement grant that we give to the village education committees, atleast, a means of using some funds at their disposal and exercising a choice in the way that they would like to vision the school, however, restricted it might be.

So, to that extent, I would think that the DPEP through its limited intervention and atleast its first attempt, is making a beginning even if it is rather too late in generating some of these so called issues which have actually been impeding the community participation in its realistic sense.

The other thing also I would like to emphasize here, is that community participation in DPEP is envisaged through the conscious and active involvement of the community not only in bringing about a sense of ownership, but also as an integral part of the school monitoring and thereby school effectiveness. This particular area in a sense still remains to be developed though it is known theoretically. But how does the community, for example, ensure that the teachers actually are present in the school

and therefore, contribute more to the learning within the school rather than outside.

The other things that we are also doing within the context of DPEP is also to see that for the first time communities have an opportunity to be trained and also have an opportunity to build capacities in, perhaps, certain areas which have direct bearing on their village life situation and to be more re-attempting in DPEP, starting a process of developing a village based school plan which would eventually be dovetailed into the work plans of the district.

The other aspect also of community participation that we see within DPEP is that of mobilizing community through awareness campaigns, advocacy and allowing for focussed interventions on the girl child, Scheduled Castes and perhaps Scheduled Tribes as well. So we do have examples from various states where the community involvement in school matters has provided us positive feedback on the extent and nature of the processes that have been initiated at the village level. However, I must be honest and say that this is only a beginning and perhaps, they should have actually happened as mentioned many-many years ago.

The other theme of this conference namely, learning organization and school effectiveness which was the parallel theme, also provided us multi-faceted perspectives on a very important area namely, on topics like alternative approaches to curriculum, learning organization in multi-grade and multi-level situations, activity based classroom transactions and school effectiveness etc. These, too, form the core of the DPEP related interventions but what is interesting, perhaps, was the feedback that we received and the sheer diversity of positions that were taken into what exactly the contents of this alternative approach should be, how are the different ways in which learning organization can be arranged in multigrade and multilevel situations, how when you can look at the various facets of activity based classroom transaction etc. It is precisely, this varied perspective that we find is particularly useful for us in the Bureau as you would probably know that DPEP does appreciate and place considerable emphasis on research based issues that have a bearing on the questions that can be raised in respect of the interventions.

At times perhaps these questions may be very uncomfortable and as I once asked a very senior bureaucrat, "Sir, did you ever find utility for research studies?" So he told me very honestly "No" and then I asked him "Why" he said "I never found solutions but I could always raise the right questions". So I think in some senses the research issues even if it helps you raise the right questions, it enables you to look more closely into your programme, see the sore points if there are any and allow you to take mid-course corrections which is precisely what we feel as the value of the research based feedback certificate from seminars such as these.

It is in this spirit, that we welcome seminars which have increasingly expanded the spectrum of issues and also provided divergences in the polarity of viewpoints across various researches. I must admit, that at times we really don't know whether the catchment area of the number of researches really needs to be increased and whether perhaps one direction



which we might look to in the next seminar is to really get some of the DPEP states, and the DPEP offices to also present some of their own researches which might have an insight into how they have seen and what they have actually learnt from the impact of their various interventions in the State.

With these few words, Sir, I think I shall end. We look forward to the publication of the deliberations of this seminar. On behalf of the DPEP Bureau, MHRD I would like to thank Director, NCERT, Prof. Sharma and also Prof. Ved Prakash, Seminar Coordinator for the exemplary organization of the seminar. Thank you!

## Vote of Thanks

Prof. A.N. Maheshwari, *Joint Director, NCERT*

Shri Anand Sarup Ji, Chief Guests of this function, Prof. A.K.Sharma, Prof. Ved Prakash, Dr Roopa Joshi, distinguished participants of the seminar, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I deem it a privilege and am very proud of it that I am standing here before you to extend Vote of Thanks at the concluding function of the fourth International Research seminar.

I had commenced a journey, exactly a year ago, whose destination we have just now reached. In this journey, Dr Ved Prakash was my constant companion, both physically and also in action. Both of us while traversing the journey, were helped by a large number of persons many of whom are not in the audience today. We are deeply indebted to them for all the help that they have rendered to us especially in the organization of the four regional seminars. Many of the participants of these four regional seminars whom we could not include for presentation of their paper because of not any inadequacies in their ideas but because of the paucity of time available with us in the sharing of the papers.

We have been helped by a large number of persons as I have mentioned who have contributed in making these seminars a truly international activity of highest quality. The level of intellectual deliberations, we have topped them, I have received independent endorsements from many of you both from within the country and our international guests that they told us that this particular seminar, the fourth one, which we have concluded is marked by the intellectual level of the discussions that took place after the presentation in the two panel discussions that were held yesterday and today.

Our Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development, inspite of his preoccupation, though he could not attend the inaugural function, he found time to come to us on the second day for meeting you and sharing with us his concepts of primary education especially when we have the challenge of achieving universalization within the financial constraints of this developing country. He stayed behind with us after his address to interact with you and we are thankful to you for making adjustment in the schedule of presentations of papers for the time that was devoted to the visit of the Hon'ble Minister, yesterday. We are extremely thankful to the Education Secretary Shri P.R.Dasgupta who has been a source of inspiration and support to us. He was also able to come with the Minister yesterday.

We know what effort has been involved in long journeys of many of you who have travelled from South Africa, European countries to be here with us. We are extremely thankful to you for your contributions for your genuine appreciation and interest in primary education of this country.

I am extremely thankful to Shri Anand Sarup Ji, who is the eldest among all of us here, for accepting our invitation to be with us in the

valedictory function of the seminar. His frank, candid views have inspired all of us. I am extremely thankful to you, Sir. I know of your genuine interest in grappling the issues of primary education. On many occasions I have had the privilege of listening to you, your very sharp mind, your critical thinking on issues of school education and your today's address has been very educative to all those of us who have had the privilege of listening to your valedictory address.

This seminar has been helped by a large number of persons as I have already acknowledged but we have persons who have been very silent workers but whose contributions were very crucial to a very smooth organization of this event. I like to acknowledge from the podium contributions of Dr Gautam, Dr Bansal, Smt Bhalla, she had to leave on account of some pressing commitment, for working literally day and night in shouldering multifarious responsibilities connected with an event of this type.

There have been a large number of persons again who normally are not visible but whose contributions are extremely crucial. I have in mind the Secretarial staff who have helped us in the preparation of conference papers. They had to literally work against time to meet various schedules and I am, indeed, grateful to them from my heart for all the support that they have given us. These seminars have been extremely helpful to me personally, because I have come to know many persons from within the country and from abroad who are genuinely interested in issues of education in this country and were wonderful human beings and this has become a forum for us to develop friendship. I would not like as people have been saying, that may be emotional aspect is as important as rational thinking, I like to still contain my inner emotion in acknowledging their contributions and support through E-mail and varieties of ways they have been giving me and my colleagues help in making this event possible.

Last of all, I would like to acknowledge the tremendous support and faith that Prof. Sharma has reposed in us, in our ability to organize this event. The full autonomy that he delegated to us and we cherish it and I thank him on my behalf and on behalf of the DPEP Core Resource Group and everyone else for the understanding that he has shown in our ability to organize this event. I wish all of you a safe journey back and I hope to see you, many of you, next year in July 1999. Thank you!

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